The Old Court Suburb

Leigh Hunt

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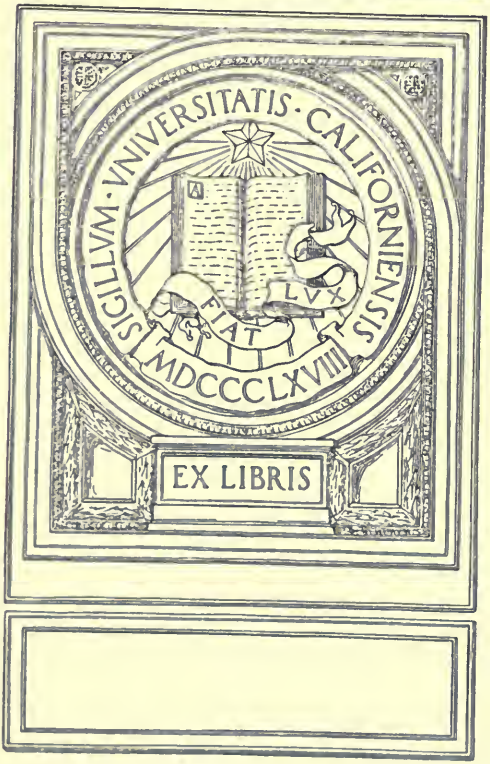

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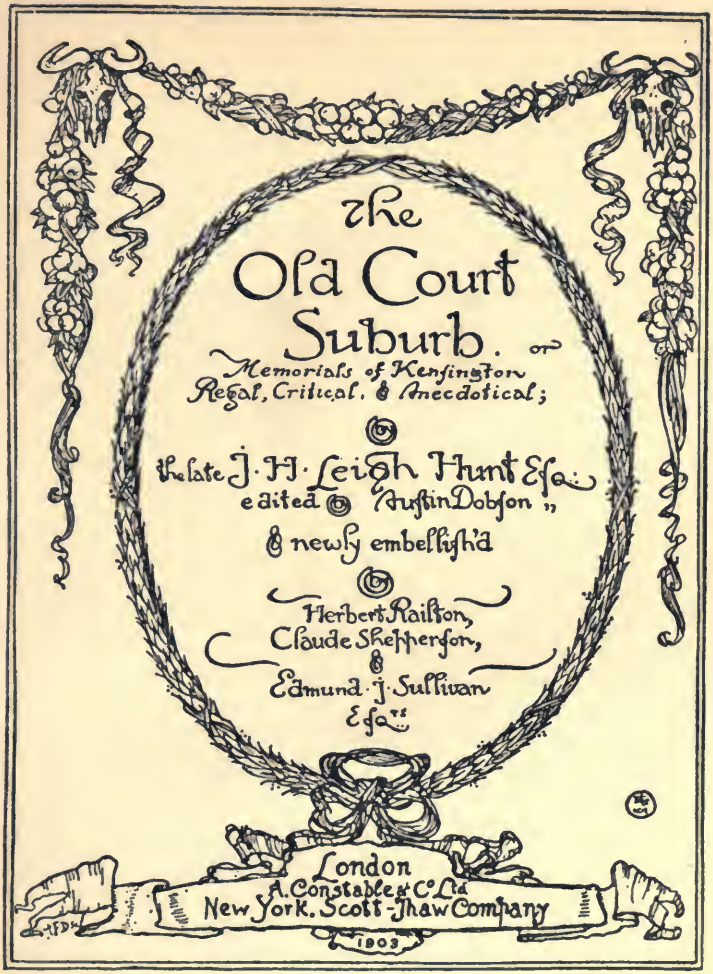
THE OLD COURT SUBURB

VOL. I

Leigh Hunt.



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Herbert Railton.

INTRODUCTION

That 'The Old Court Suburb' should have been written during its author's long sojourn at Kensington, is a presumption so plausible, that one is not surprised to find it announced as an established fact. But a very brief consultation of the late Mr Monkhouse's careful life of Leigh Hunt in the 'Great Writers' series, speedily shows that the statement requires considerable qualification. In 1840 *Leigh Hunt moved from* 4 *(now* 10*), Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea, to* 32 *Edwardes Square, Kensington; and he lived at the latter place until* 1851*, when he again moved to* 2 *Phillimore Terrace in the same parish. Here the death, in* 1852*, of Vincent Hunt, his 'too willing factotum, amanuensis, friend, son, and servant,' made the place painful to him; and about the middle of* 1853 *he migrated to* 7 *Cornwall Road, Hammersmith ('near Hammersmith Broadway,' says one of his correspondents), where he continued to live until his death in* 1859*. Like 'The Town,' chapters of which had been previously contributed to the* London Journal*, parts of 'The Old Court Suburb' appeared (between August* 1853 *and February* 1854*) in the* Household Words *of Dickens, —a circumstance which seems to imply that the portrait of Harold Skimpole in 'Bleak House' was already*

either forgotten or forgiven,—and the whole was published in two volumes by Hurst and Blackett in 1855. *Some preliminary work was doubtless done at Phillimore Terrace in the early months of* 1853; *but it is clear from the above that the bulk of 'The Old Court Suburb' must have been composed at Hammersmith between the middle of* 1853 *and* 1855.

In 1855 *Leigh Hunt was seventy-one years of age, and was living in comparative comfort. The old 'nondescript,' 'unutterable' days of his 'poetical Tinkerdom' at Chelsea (we are borrowing the language of his neighbour Carlyle), if not entirely over and past, had been materially mitigated. He was in receipt of an assured income. The Shelley family had generously given him an annuity of £*120; *the Government, besides two sums of £*200, *a Civil List pension of £*200 *a year; and a benefit performance of 'Every Man in his Humour,' by friendly amateurs, had brought him a bonus of £*900. *He had begun to taste 'the beatitude of actually paying as he went, and incurring no more bills.' He had become a contributor to the* Edinburgh Review, *and had succeeded, by the good offices of Macaulay, in pruning his colloquialisms to the formal standard of Macvey Napier. He was still the old sensitive, luminous-eyed Leigh Hunt of the wide collar and floating 'printed night-gown,' delighted with a flower or a bird or a butterfly, ready to die for a principle, or to scream out at a shower; but 'Time had snowed upon his pericranium,' and to his*

breezy robe de chambre *he had added, or was about to add, a protective cape, more or less ample, of faded black silk, which gave him the air (says John Forster) of 'an old French abbé.' Happily, about this very time, his portrait has been drawn by a master. He was visited at Hammersmith by Nathaniel Hawthorne, who devotes several pages of 'Our Old Home' to an account of his impressions. He found Leigh Hunt 'a beautiful and venerable old man, buttoned to the chin in a black dress-coat [he must have been going out when Hawthorne called, for this was not his ordinary costume], tall and slender, with a countenance quietly alive all over, and the gentlest and most naturally courteous manner.' The picture is too detailed to copy in full. But the author of 'The Scarlet Letter' lays stress on the wonderful variety in Hunt's play of features, on his beautiful eyes and caressing voice, his agreeable, soft, and wholly unconventional manners, and the nervous foldings of his hands as he talked, which, with other evidences, testified to his fine and immediate sensibility. Lastly, Hawthorne notes—as others have noted—his frank and almost childlike welcoming of praise. 'He accepted it,' says Barry Cornwall (who had introduced Hawthorne to him), 'less as a mark of respect from others, than as a delight of which all are entitled to partake, such as spring weather, the scent of flowers, or the flavour of wine.'*

Although, as already explained, Leigh Hunt's circumstances had improved during the last twenty years of

his life, it is clear from Hawthorne's words that they must have still been far from ideal. The house at 7 Cornwall Road, Hammersmith, was very plain, small, and shabby. It was in a mean street, and the forlorn 'little study, or parlour, or both,' was poorly papered and poorly carpeted, with 'an awful lack of upholstery.' * *There were no pictures that his visitor remembered (fancy this of the man who said 'Put up a picture in your room!'), and what was worse, there were only 'few books.' Alas! those 'few books'! One sighs to think how much the words signified to the writer who was bookish above all, and conscientious to a fault about 'verifying his references.' He would spend hours, says his son and biographer, Thornton Hunt, in painfully checking what he had perhaps only mentioned parenthetically, and where authorities were lacking, the roundabout labour must often have been cruel. In his 'Correspondence,' we get glimpses of him at work on this very chronicle of Old Kensington, and his difficulties are manifest. Even at the outset of the papers, he is delayed for lack of unobtainable material. Then we find him writing to his son Percy as to the Lord Scarsdale of Chapter X.:*

'Each mortal has his pleasure: none deny
Scarsdale his bottle, Darty his Ham-pie.'

Dartineuf he knows all about; but he wants more

* *This may have improved, for later interviewers 'admired the taste which he managed to communicate to his small rooms'* (British Quarterly Review, *October* 1885).

as to Scarsdale in connection with Scarsdale House. Will dear Percy look in Warton, and Roscoe, and so forth? Next he is to consult 'the biggest History of England he can find' for tidings of the 'Sir Manhood Penruddock' of Chapter VIII.; after which his fond parent requires particulars in support of a growing theory about the Veres and Holland (Chapter XIV.). Percy is to examine 'a Dutch and English or Dutch and French Dictionary'—if 'the Library [probably the London Library which Hunt complimented in the 'Stories from Italian Poets,' or perhaps Hookham's in Bond Street] has such a thing'—to find out the meaning of Weer. *And can he detect* Weer—*the place, that is—in a map? All this inquiry by deputy must have been most tedious, not only to the deputy, but to the inquirer. Then sickness comes to add its obstructions and delays to that 'temperament easily solaced in mind, and as easily drowsed in body; quick to enjoy every object in creation, . . . and at the same time really qualified to do nothing,' as he says in his 'Apologia,' except in certain ways. Holland House he did manage to go over, through the kindness of General Fox and his wife; but notwithstanding 'a gracious permission to see the interior of Kensington Palace,' continual ill-health seems to have prevented him from making that excursion, as it had before prevented him from seeing the Great Exhibition of* 1851. *These things have their effects upon his work. Apart from the disposition to*

digress which is inseparable from his manner and his charm, one sees that more than one of the chapters of 'The Old Court Suburb' are written round a single book, that they are sometimes expanded where expansion is not needed, and that occasionally the digressions have an air of padding. But the writer's enthusiasm, and his capacity (to quote his own words again) 'for enjoying every object in creation, everything in nature and in art, every sight, every sound, every book, picture and flower,' generally bring him through triumphantly. He is so pleased himself that, in Steele's phrase, it is 'humanity' for his reader to be pleased as well. And he is unquestionably a delightful guide and companion. He has always 'the right association in the right place,' said one of his early reviewers. 'Nowhere is it possible to become more agreeably acquainted with celebrated people, or to wander more pleasantly in the by-paths of history'; and Charles Lamb admirably hit off his friend's best quality when he wrote—

'*The* Indicative *is your* Potential *Mood.*'

'The Old Court Suburb' of to-day presents a very different aspect from that which was described by Leigh Hunt in 1855. *From Kensal Green on the north (where he lies buried) to Brompton on the south; from Holland House on the west to Knightsbridge on the east—a Babel of buildings has sprung up of which he knew nothing. Holland House, indeed, is still existent, though in contracted grounds; but a railway has tunnelled under Campden Hill, and Queen Anne's*

Palace is surrendered in part to the sightseer. Gore House, Kensington House, Colby House, Scarsdale House, have all disappeared; and a fine Gothic edifice by Sir Gilbert Scott has taken the place of the picturesque old Church in the High Street. The Albert Memorial, the Albert Hall, the Imperial Institute, the Natural History Museum, the South Kensington Collections, are all post-Huntian; and they are not yet grown old enough to be venerable. It has been no part of the plan of this Preface to describe these modern additions to the bricks and mortar of the locality, or to relate its intermediate history. But with the help of such recent authorities as Mr Loftie's excellent 'Kensington,' and the 'Holland House' of the Princess Marie Liechtenstein, we have endeavoured to add to each chapter such brief notes as may serve to leave the reader in no doubt wherever the references of Leigh Hunt have become obscure from lapse of time, or require to be corrected in the light of the latest researches.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

EALING, *October* 1901.

THE beauty and salubrity of Kensington, its combination (so to speak) of the elegancies of town and country, and the multitude of its associations with courts, wits, and literature, have long rendered it such a favourite with the lovers of books, that the want of some account of it, not altogether alien to its character, has constantly surprised them.

The place is not only free from everything repulsive to the consideration (unless it be one hidden spot, which the new improvements will remove), but attention is fairly invited throughout. The way to it is the pleasantest out of town; you may walk in high-road, or on grass, as you please; the fresh air salutes you from a healthy soil; and there is not a step of the way, from its commence-

ment at Kensington Gore, to its termination beyond Holland House, in which you are not greeted with the face of some pleasant memory.

Here, to 'minds' eyes' conversant with local biography, stands a beauty, looking out of a window; there, a wit, talking with other wits at a garden-gate; there, a poet on the green sward, glad to get out of the London smoke, and find himself among trees.

Here come De Veres of the times of old; Hollands and Davenants, of the Stuart and Cromwell times; Evelyn peering about him soberly, and Samuel Pepys in a bustle. Here advance Prior, Swift, Arbuthnot, Gay, Sir Isaac Newton; Steele from visiting Addison, Walpole from visiting the Foxes, Johnson from a dinner with Elphinstone, *Junius* from a communication with Wilkes.

Here, in his carriage, is King William the Third, going from the Palace to open Parliament; Queen Anne, for the same purpose; George the First, George the Second (we shall have the pleasure of looking at all these personages a little more closely); and there, from out of Kensington Gardens, comes bursting, as if the whole recorded polite world were in flower at one and the same period, all the fashion of the gayest times of those sovereigns, blooming with chintzes, full-blown with hoop-petticoats, towering with top-knots and toupees.

Here comes 'Lady Mary,' *quizzing* everybody, and Lady Suffolk, looking discreet; there the lovely

"Talking with other wits at a garden gate."

Bellendens and Lepels; there Miss Howe, laughing with Nanty Lowther (who made her very grave afterwards); there Chesterfield, Hanbury Williams, Lord Hervey; Miss Chudleigh, not over-clothed; the Miss Gunnings, drawing crowds of admirers; and here is George Selwyn interchanging wit with my Lady Townshend, the 'Lady Bellaston' (so, at least, it has been said) of 'Tom Jones.'

Who is to know of all this company, and not be willing to meet it? To meet it, therefore, we propose, both out-of-doors and in-doors, not omitting other persons who are worth half the rest—Mrs Inchbald for one. Mrs Inchbald shall close the last generation for us, and Coleridge shall bring us down to our own time.

Not that we propose to treat the subject chronologically, except in exhausting one point at a time. The general chronological point of view, though good to begin with, in order to show the rise and growth of a place, would not suit inspection into particulars. It would only end in confusing both place and time, by jumping backwards and forwards from the same houses for the purpose of meeting contemporary demands.

The best way of proceeding, after taking the general survey, is to set out from some particular spot, on the ordinary principle of perambulation, and so attend to each house, or set of premises by itself, as far as we are acquainted with it.

Our perambulation, however, must not be parochial. Parish geography is a singular confounder of all received ideas of limitation. Ely Place, Holborn, is in the county of Cambridge; there are portions of other shires, which are in *other* shires; and, parochially considered, Kensington is not only more than Kensington in some places, but it is not Kensington itself in others. In Kensington parish, for instance, are included Earl's Court, Little Chelsea, Old and New Brompton, Kensal Green, and even some of the houses in Sloane Street; while, on the other hand, Kensington Palace and Kensington Gardens are not in Kensington, but in the parish of St Margaret's, Westminster.

Taking leave, therefore, of the wandering imaginations of parish officers, and confining ourselves to the received idea of Kensington, which is the same as that of the Post-office or Red Book, we shall consider the locality as circumscribed by Knightsbridge, Earl's Court, Hammersmith, Notting Hill, and Bayswater; and since Kensington is more visited from the London side than any other, with the London side we shall begin.

As to the nature and amount of the attention we purpose to pay to the respective objects of our notice, it will be precisely that which other observers pay, who are interested in such things, when going along a road. We shall suppose that the reader is our companion; that we are giving him what informa-

tion we possess in return for the pleasure of his society; and that we say neither more nor less on any one of the objects, than might naturally be said between friends actually walking together, and equally alive to the only real interest of the subject, that is to say, of human interest; for gardens themselves, whether at Kensington or at Eden, would be nothing without eyes to enjoy them; and houses are dry bones, unless invested with interests of flesh and blood.

But first for the brief survey before mentioned, and a word or two respecting the name of the place.

The meaning of the word Kensington is disputed. It is commonly derived from the Saxon *Kyning's*-tun, King's-town; though, as it is written *Chenesitun* in Doomsday Book, and in other old records, it has been thought traceable to some landed proprietor, of the name of *Chenesi*, a family so called having been found in Somersetshire, in the reign of Edward the Confessor. Another ancient authority writes the word, *Chensnetun*. Temptations to etymology are great; and as the *Chenesi* family was probably the same as the modern *Cheynès* or *Cheyneys*, and *Cheyne* comes from the old French word *chesne* (oak), and 'chensnet' *might* have been *chesne-nut*, or *chestnut* (oak and chestnut — *chastain* — having possibly the same root in French, and their timber, of which London was built, possessing a good deal in common), Saxon and Norman antiquaries might

be led into much pleasant dispute, as to the regal and woodland origin of the word Kensington; whether the oak and chestnut trees, which still have representatives in the district, were the occasion of the name; or whether some Saxon prince —Alfred, for instance, who was the rebuilder of London—going some fine morning to look at his wood-cutters, and considering how healthy the soil was, and how fresh the western wind blew upon his brow, chose to set up a summer-lodge there, in which to recreate his profound thoughts, and benefit the health which he was injuring for his country. But we must not be diverted into these speculations.

Whatever was the origin of its name, there is no doubt that the first inhabited spot of Kensington was an enclosure from the great Middlesex forest that once occupied this side of London, and which extended northwards as far as Barnet. The woody nature of a portion of the district is implied in a passage in Doomsday Book; and records exist, which show that forest trees were abundant in it as late as the time of Henry the Eighth.

The overflowing of the Thames, to which Chelsea and Hammersmith were subject, stopped short of the higher ground of Kensington; there was no great road through it till comparatively modern times, the only highway for travellers westward, being the old Roman, or present Uxbridge Road, then bending southerly (as it still branches) to

Turnham Green; and thus we are to picture to ourselves the future royal suburb, as consisting of half-a-dozen rustical tenements of swineherds and other foresters, clustering about the homestead of the chieftain or speculator, whoever he was, that first cleared away a spot in that corner. By degrees dairymen came, and ploughmen; then vine-growers; and the first Norman proprietor we hear of, is a bishop.

'Albericus de Ver tenet de episcopo Constantiensi Chenesit (um).'

Aubrey de Vere holds Kensington of the Bishop of Constance.

So writes Doomsday Book. Constance is Coutances in Normandy; and the bishop, who was, probably, anything but a reverend personage, in the modern sense of the epithet, but a stalwart, jolly fellow, clad in arms *cap-à-pie*, was also Grand Justiciary of England; that is to say, one whose business it was to do injustice to Englishmen, and see their goods and chattels delivered over to his countrymen, the Normans. Accordingly, to set a good legal example, the Justiciary seizes upon this manor of Kensington, which belonged, it seems, to one 'Edward': a name which signifies Happy Keeper. So Happy Keeper (unless detained to keep the pigs) makes the best of his way off, blessing this delightful bishop and judge, whose office it is to oust proprietors; and he is, perhaps, stripped and

murdered, somewhere about Notting Hill, by his Lordship's chaplain.*

The De Veres, however, who afterwards gave twenty Earls of Oxford to the English peerage, were not long in becoming absolute possessors of the Manor of Kensington; and they held it, directly or indirectly, from the time of the Conqueror nearly up to that of James the First. It is doubted, nevertheless, whether they ever resided there, though there was a mansion belonging to them, which occupied a site near the present Holland House, and which is still represented by a kind of remnant of a successor. We shall have more to say of the family by-and-by.

But whatever was the importance of the district, as the possession of a race of nobles, it obtains no distinct or certain image in the mind of the topographer till Holland House itself makes its appearance, which was not till the reign of James the First, when it was built by Sir Walter Cope, who had purchased the estate towards the close of the reign preceding. A succession of noble and other residents, of whom we shall have to speak, and who have rendered it one of the most interesting objects in the neighbourhood of London, soon brought shops and houses about it; Campden House, the seat of Lord Campden, arose not long after

* For the crimes and iniquities of the military churchmen who came over with William of Normandy, see Thierry's 'History of the Conquest,' *passim*.

Holland House; the healthiness and fashion of the place attracted other families of distinction; and its importance was completed, when King William bought the house and grounds of the Finch family (Earls of Nottingham), and converted the house into a palace, and the grounds into royal gardens. Holland House, Campden House, Kensington House, the Square, the Church, the Palace, and the Gardens, are the seven oldest objects of interest in Kensington; and lively and abundant are the memorials which most of them have left us.

But newer creations possess their interest also, up to the latest period; and it may be said, without the usual hazards attending prefatory commendation, that in comparison with 'kingly Kensington,' as Swift called it, every other suburb of London, however interesting in its degree, is but as the strip of garden before one of its houses, compared with Kensington Gardens themselves during the height of their season.

CHAPTER TWO

We begin our perambulation, as proposed, on the side next the metropolis. We should rather say, next Piccadilly, for the metropolis, alas! and Kensington, are now joined; though from Knightsbridge to the Palace, the houses still occupy only one side of the way.

It is a very pleasant way, especially if you come through the Park. When we quit Piccadilly for Hyde Park Corner, we, for our part, always fancy that the air, somehow, feels not only fresher, but *whiter*, and this feeling increases as we find the turf under our feet, and the fresh air in one's face. The roadway through Knightsbridge, with its rows of houses on one side, and its barracks on the other, is not so agreeable; though, by way of compensation, you have the chance of having your eyes refreshed with a dignified sergeant of dragoons, too fat for his sash, and a tall private, walking with a little woman.

The long and again unoccupied side of the road in the Park, reaching from the Knightsbridge Barracks to within a short distance of the Gardens,

lately presented to the eyes of the world a spectacle singularly illustrative of the advanced character of the age, and such, we believe, as no attempts to bring back a worse spirit in Europe will deprive of its good effects, however threatening those attempts may appear. We need not say that we allude to the Great Exhibition. We do not say 'Crystal Palace,' for it was a pity, though it was natural enough on its first rising with that fairy suddenness, that the building was so called; since it was neither crystal nor a palace. It was a bazaar, admirably constructed for its purpose, and justly surprising those who beheld its interior. When we thought it was to be destroyed, without renovation elsewhere, we felt amazed at the selfishness of such of its rich neighbours as could insist on the performance of a promise to that effect notwithstanding the wishes of millions, restricted in their enjoyments. But as soon as it was determined that the structure should reappear in another quarter, and this too with those improvements in point of size and treatment which the designer himself had longed for power to effect, we felt as glad to have the old trees and turf back again, undisturbed, as the most sequestered of the suburban aristocracies. We rejoiced in a result, upon which, in fact, all parties were to be congratulated; and we began to own, that there certainly had been a *dust* and *kick-up* about the once quiet approach to Kensington, a

turmoil of crowds, and omnibuses, and cabs, of hot faces and loud voices, of stalls, dogs, penny trumpets, policemen, and extempore public-houses, which, for the sake of the many themselves, one could hardly have wished to see continued, lest they also should ultimately have missed their portion in the tranquil pleasure of the few. A winter-garden, to be sure, would have been a good thing, and conservatories and other elegancies, all the year round, would have been still better; but all these we are promised in the new premises at Sydenham; and though the near neighbourhood of London was an advantage in some respects, it was not such in others. Multitudes became somewhat too multitudinous. European brotherhood itself, now and then, felt its toes trodden upon a little too sharply. The most generous emulations, if they want elbow-room, are in danger of relapsing into antagonisms. A juvenile wit, in the shape of a pot-boy, who appears to have possessed a profound natural insight into this tendency of the meeting of extremes, cried out one day to a couple of foreigners who were showing symptoms of a set-to, 'Go it, *all nations*.'

The road from Knightsbridge to Kensington, which the Great Exhibition looked on, is called the Gore; a word which, with the surveyor as well as the sempstress, appears to mean a slip or graft of something in addition, and of the shape of a blunted cone; though the elegance to which the spot has

attained must not let us forget, that the same word has been employed in the sense of 'mud and dirt,' and that the road in this quarter used to be in very bad condition. Lord Hervey, writing towards the middle of the last century, describes it as shocking. And the royal roads through the Park were little better.

'The removing from Kensington to St James's, for the purpose of facilitating the Queen's intercourse with ministers, seems in our days' (observes the editor of his Lordship's 'Memoirs') 'very singular; but the following extract from a letter to his mother, dated 27th November 1736, will explain it.

'"The road between this place (Kensington and London) is grown so infamously bad, that we live here in the same solitude as we should do if cast on a rock in the middle of the ocean; and all the Londoners tell us there is between them and us a great impassable gulf of mud. There are two ways through the Park, but the new one is so convex, and the old one so concave, that by this extreme of faults they agree in the common one of being, like the high road, impassable."'*

Kensington Gore commences opposite Prince's Gate, with the mansion called Ennismore or Listowell House, formerly Kingston House. It is now the residence of the nobleman who possesses those two first titles, was lately that of the Marquis

* Vol. ii. p. 189.

Wellesley, and was built by the once notorious Duchess of Kingston, famous in the annals of bigamy.

The Duchess of Kingston—the Miss Chudleigh, of whom we have had a glimpse by anticipation in Kensington Gardens—was an adventuress, who, after playing tricks with a parish register for the purpose of alternately falsifying and substantiating a real marriage, according as the prospects of her husband varied, imposed herself on a duke for a spinster, and survived him as his duchess till unmasked by a Court of Law.

She was a well-born and handsome, but coarse-minded woman, qualified to impose on none but very young or very shallow admirers. Her first husband, who became Earl of Bristol, was at the time of his marriage a young seaman, just out of his teens; and the Duke, her second husband, though he was nephew of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, appears never to have outgrown the teens of his understanding.

Hating prolixity and mock-modesty, her Ladyship's maxim, we are told, was to be 'short, clear, and surprising'; so she concentrated her rhetoric into swearing, and dressed in a style next to nakedness. The wealth, however, which was bequeathed her by the Duke, enabled her, in spite of the loss of his title in England, to go and flare as a Duchess abroad, where her jewels procured

her the friendship of sovereigns, and the Pope figured in her will.

Marquis Wellesley redeems Kingston House from the disgrace of its origin; for he was a highly refined personage. Some thought him too refined; and stories were told of the care which he took of his complexion. Fastidious he certainly was; fond of pomp and show when he governed India; and a little too superfine, perhaps, in his tastes always. There was a curious difference in these, as well as in some other respects, between him and his brother, the great soldier. But we must not lightly believe stories to the disparagement of those who mingle infirmities with great qualities.

What is certain of the Marquis Wellesley is that, with all his aristocratic drawbacks, he was a man of gentle and kindly manners; very generous; an energetic, judicious, and, upon the whole, singularly liberal statesman for an extender of empire; and that the passion in him which survived all others, was a love of the classical studies of his boyhood. This was so strong, that he directed himself to be buried at Eton College, where he had been brought up—a triumphant testimony, surely, to the natural goodness of his heart.

It is affecting to our common humanity to see one of the most public of statesmen, and one of the most sequestered of poets (Gray, in his Ode), thus meeting on the same good old ground of boyish reminiscence.

MARQUIS WELLESLEY

'Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!'

Not 'in vain,' however, if their influence thus accompanies us through life, and greets our approaches to the grave.

It is said that the Duke of Wellington, who visited the Marquis to the last, was sometimes kept waiting; upon which he remarked one day, 'I believe my brother thinks he is still Governor-General of India, and that I am only Colonel Wellesley.' It is not impossible that, from old habit and a little bit of civil grudge against military ascendency (but all in a spirit of kindliness, which the sensible Duke would understand and indulge), the elder brother did not dislike to keep up his privileges of primogeniture.

A curious local preëminence attends Kingston House, little suspected by those who pass it. It stands on the highest ground between London and Windsor Castle.

Next to this mansion is a row of new houses, each too high for its width, called Prince's Gate. They resemble a set of tall thin gentlemen, squeezing together to look at something over the way.

The old wall containing their neighbour, Park House, indicates the northern boundary of the once famous Kensington or Brompton Park Nursery,

which figures in the pages of the *Spectator* as the establishment of Messieurs London & Wise, the most celebrated gardeners of their time. It commenced in the reign of Charles the Second; furnished all England with plants; and is only now giving up its last green ghost before the rise of new buildings.

Wrought Iron Gate & Railing at Kensington Gore

Kingston House

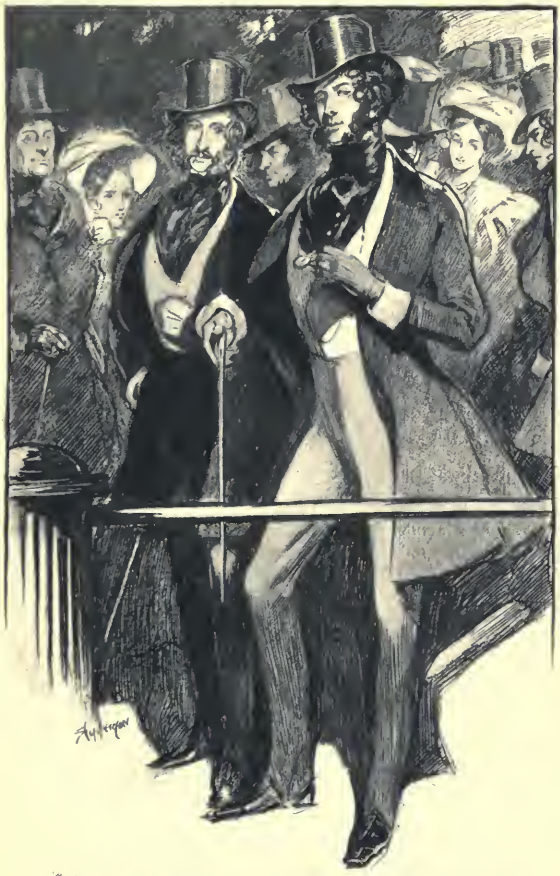
CHAPTER THREE

We have said that Kensington Gore, in Red Books and Directories, is understood to begin at Kingston (or Ennismore) House. And such is the case. But as the only rows of houses till of late years, that is to say, of houses in actual conjunction, were that which you pass just before reaching the Cabinet Exhibition, and another lower down the road, the former of these rows is still inscribed, 'Kensington Gore,' and is the spot emphatically so called. It is also, to distinguish it from the other, sometimes called the Upper Gore. We notice it the more particularly, because it is remarkable, among other respects, for its style of building. It consists but of five houses, four of which are faced with white stucco, all of them very small, and Nos. 2 and 3 apparently consisting but of one room (a drawing-room) with six windows. Yet they have an air of elegance, and even of distinction. They look as if they had been intended for the outhouses, or lodge, of some great mansion which was never built; and as if, upon the failure of that project,

they had been divided into apartments for retainers of the Court. You might imagine that a supernumerary set of maids of honour had lived there (if maids of honour could live alone); or that five younger brothers of lords of the bed-chamber had been the occupants — all being bachelors and expecting places in reversion. The two houses which seem to be nothing but one drawing-room, possess, however, parlours and second stories at the back, and have good gardens; so that what with their flowers behind them, the park in front, and their own neatness and elegance, the miniature aristocracy of their appearance is not ill borne out.

In the year 1816, Mrs Inchbald (of whom more hereafter) knocked at the door of one of these houses, in hopes of getting the apartments that were to let; but the lodging-house lady was so fine a personage, and so very unaccommodating, besides reserving all the prospect for herself, and charging a round sum for the rooms which had no prospect, that the authoress of the 'Simple Story' indignantly walked off. She says that the furniture was crazy; that she would not have accepted the first floor, had it been offered her for nothing; and that one of her big trunks would have taken up half the bedroom.

Since that day, there is reason to believe that the furniture has much improved; for besides the air of taste which is diffused over all the little



"A glass of fashion and mould of form."

stuccoed houses, they have boasted divers inhabitants of worship: and at No. 5, for a short time, lived Count d'Orsay. We shall have more to say of this distinguished person a little further on, when we come to Gore House. But it is impossible to mention such a 'glass of fashion, and mould of form,' without stopping a moment to look at him with our 'mind's eye'; and as care had not yet overtaken him while residing at this house, we cannot but observe at once how truly he merited the application of those words of Shakspeare.

To see d'Orsay coming up a lobby, or a drawing-room, was a sight; his face was so delicate, his figure so manly, and his white waistcoat so ample and august. We happened once to see him and O'Connell sitting opposite one another, the latter with a waistcoat to match; and we were at a loss to think which had the finer 'thorax' of the two—the great Irishman, who thundered across the channel, or the magnificent French Adonis, who seemed to ennoble dandyism.

Over the doorway of No. 2 is a vase; and as old inhabitants do not remember when this vase was set up, it was not improbably a manifestation of his classical taste by a once much-talked-of person; for in this house a little sequestered establishment was kept by the once famous demagogue, Wilkes—a man as much over-estimated perhaps by his admirers, for a patriotism which was never thoroughly

disinterested, as he was depreciated for a libertinism, by no means unaccompanied with good qualities. 'Jack Wilkes,' as he was familiarly called—Member of Parliament, alderman, fine gentleman, scholar, coarse wit, and middling writer, was certainly an 'impudent dog,' in more senses than that of 'Jack Absolute' in the play. Excess of animal spirits, and the want of any depth of perception into some of the gravest questions, led him into outrages against decorum, that were justly denounced by all but the hypocritical. Nevertheless, the country is indebted to him for more than one benefit, particularly the freedom from arbitrary arrest; and the two daughters that Jack left behind him, illegitimate as well as legitimate, were models of well-educated, sensible women, as fond of their father as he had shown himself fond of them. The popularity to which he had attained at one time was immense. 'Wilkes and Liberty' was the motto of the universal English nation. It was on every wall; sometimes on every door, and on every coach (to enable it to get along); it stamped the butter-pats, the biscuits, the handkerchiefs; in short, had so identified one word with the other, that a wit, writing to somebody, began his letter with, 'Sir, I take the Wilkes and Liberty to assure you."

Wilkes prospered so well by his patriotism, that he maintained three establishments at a time; one in the Isle of Wight, for the summer; another in

WILKES

Grosvenor Square, where his daughter Mary kept house for him; and the third at this place in Kensington Gore, where his second daughter, Harriet, lived with her mother, a Mrs Arnold, who assisted in training her with a propriety that must have been thought remarkable. The first daughter, who was as plain and as lively as her father, died unmarried, universally lamented. The other, a very agreeable lady, in face as well as in manners, we had the pleasure of seeing once, in company with her husband, the late estimable Serjeant Rough, who became a judge in India, and who deplored her loss.

A Kensington memorandum by Wilkes will show what high visitors he had, and how well he could entertain them.

'Mr Swinburne dined with me last Sunday, with Monsieur Barthelemi, and the Counts Woronzow and Nesselrode. I gave them the chicken-turtle, dressed at the London Tavern, a haunch of venison, and was served by James and Samuel from Prince's Court, who behave very well. The day passed very cheerfully, and they all expressed themselves highly delighted.'

Wilkes, who lived to a good age, owing probably to his love of exercise, was in the habit, to the last, of walking from Kensington to the city, deaf to the solicitations of the hackney-coachmen, and not at all minding, or rather, perhaps, courting, the

attention of everybody else to an appearance, which must always have been remarkable. Personal defects deprecate or defy notice, according to the disposition of the individual. Wilkes was not disposed to deprecate anything. He was tall, meagre, and sallow, with an underhung, grinning, good-humoured jaw, and an obliquity of vision, which, however objectionable in the eyes of opponents, occasioned the famous vindication from a partizan, that its possessor did not 'squint more than a gentleman should.' Upon the strength of his having been a Colonel of Militia, the venerable patriot daily attired his person in a suit of scarlet and buff, with a rosette in his cocked hat, and a pair of military boots; and the reader may fancy him thus coming towards Knightsbridge, ready to take off the hat in the highest style of good breeding to anybody that courted it, or to give the gentleman 'satisfaction,' if he was disrespectful to the squint. For Wilkes was as brave as he was light-hearted. He was an odd kind of English-Frenchman, that had strayed into Farringdon Ward Without; and he ultimately mystified both King and people; for he was really of no party, but that of pleasure and a fine coat. The best thing about him was his love of his daughters; just as the pleasantest thing in the French is their walking about with their families on the Boulevards, after all the turbulence and volatility of their insurrections.

But an interest attaches to this house of Wilkes's far beyond these pleasant anomalies; for here Junius visited. At this door, knocking towards dinner-time, might be seen a tall, good-looking gentleman, of an imposing presence, who, if anybody passing by had known who he was, and had chosen to go and tell it, might have been the making of the man's fortune. This was Philip Francis, afterwards one of the denouncers of Hastings, ultimately Sir Philip Francis, K.B., and now, since the publication of Mr Taylor's book on the subject, understood to be that 'mighty boar of the forest,' as Burke called him, trampling down all before him, the author of 'Junius's Letters.' Mrs Rough said, that he dined at Kensington frequently, and that he once cut off a lock of her hair. She was then a child. She only knew him as Mr Francis; but she had 'an obscure imagination that her father once said she had met Junius.' He might so, in after days; but we feel convinced that Wilkes did not know him for Junius at the time. He treats the latter, in his correspondence, with a reverence which was not compatible with 'Wilkes and Liberty.' He took Junius, we suspect, to be Burke or Chatham, probably the latter. He once, it is true, when Lord Mayor, invited the great unknown to a ball, adding, in a truly French style of classical allusion (then the tone of the day) how happy he should be to see 'his Portia (Miss Wilkes) dance a graceful minuet with

SIR PHILIP FRANCIS

Junius Brutus.' But Junius Brutus saw the absurdity of the conjunction; answering, 'that he acknowledged the relation between "Cato and Portia," but in truth could see no connection between Junius and a minuet. His age and figure, too,' he said, 'would have done little credit to his partner.' In a previous letter Wilkes had said, that he did not mean to indulge 'the impertinent curiosity of finding out the most important secret of our times, the author of "Junius." He would not attempt with profane hands to tear the veil of the sanctuary. He was disposed, with the inhabitants of Attica, to erect "an altar to the unknown god" of our political idolatry, and would be content to worship him in clouds and darkness.' Upon which not inelegant comparison, Junius, still keeping his state, though smiling with condescending pleasantry, observes, that he is 'much flattered, as Mr Wilkes politely intended he should be, with the worship he is pleased to pay to the unknown god. I find,' he continues, 'I am treated as other gods usually are by their votaries, with sacrifice and ceremony in abundance, and very little obedience. The profession of your faith is unexceptionable; but I am a modest deity, and should be full as well satisfied with good works and morality.' This is admirable, and full of matter; but it is not the style that could have occurred between John Wilkes, Esquire, Sheriff of London, possessor of three establishments, and Mr Francis, at that time Clerk in

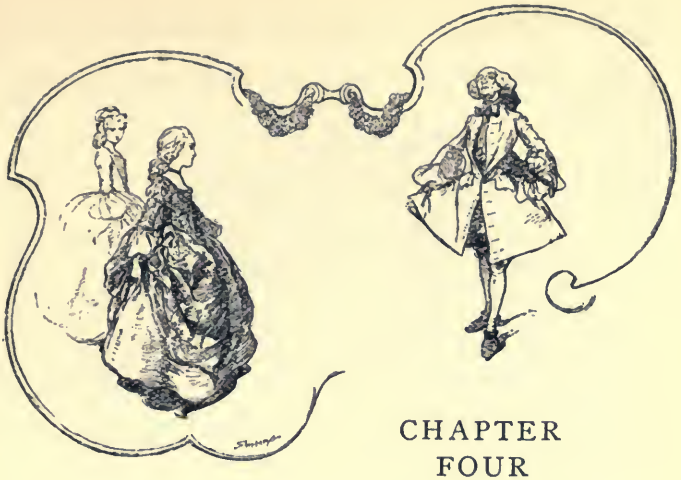
the War Office, and in the habit of dining at his table. We must add, that we take Lord Chatham, Burke, and Earl Temple, to have been in the secret of 'Junius's Letters'; that the two former objects of his admiration stimulated his manner, and that not improbably they occasionally furnished him with remarks. Nor would it have surprised us, had Temple turned out to be Junius himself. But this is not the place for discussing the question.

We take the opportunity of giving a variation of the story which Mr Taylor relates respecting the behaviour of Sir Philip at the table of George the Fourth. 'Sir Philip,' says Mr Taylor, 'was impetuous, and somewhat abrupt in manner. He once interrupted George the Fourth at the royal table (and we are credibly informed that he frequently dined there) in the midst of a tedious story, with a "Well, Sir, well!"'

Our version of this anecdote, without meaning to impugn Mr Taylor's authority, which, not improbably, is the same as our own, differently reported, is, that Sir Philip being excessively tired, not only with the story in question, but with others of the same sort which he was in the habit of hearing at the same table, interrupted the royal narration with the politer, but not less significant words: 'Well, and the result, Sir, if you please.' The result was, that he was never invited more; and our informant added, that as such a penalty was cer-

tain, it is not improbable that it was deliberately incurred.

If any of our readers, who agree with Mr Taylor in thinking Sir Philip Francis to have been Junius, should regret their never having seen that once invisible personage, we have the pleasure of informing them, that the portrait prefixed to the volume of 'Junius Identified,' is a fac-simile of the man. We met Sir Philip once coming down Bond Street, and knew him by the likeness.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE vicissitudes in the occupation of houses are curious. The first tenant we meet with in Gore House (we forget his name) is a Government contractor who was so stingy, that he would not lay out a penny to keep his garden in order. To him succeeded Mr Wilberforce, famous in the annals of evangelism and the slave-trade. The next distinguished name is Lady Blessington, who is joined by Count d'Orsay. Then comes Monsieur Soyer, who turns the place into an eating-house for 'All Nations' during the Great Exhibition. And now it has been bought by Government, in connexion with the new views for the cultivation of art.

Wilberforce, whose head was not strong enough to keep him out of the pale of religious bigotry, but

whose heart was kindly, and his temperament happy, contrived (though it is difficult to conceive how even the merriest of such theologians manage it) to combine the most terrific ideas of the next world (for others) with the most comfortable enjoyment of this world in his own person. He was a little plain-faced man, radiant by nature with glee and good-humour, very 'serious' at a moment's notice, an earnest devotee, a genial host, a good speaker and Member of Parliament; now siding, and now differing, with his friend Pitt; now joining in devotion with Lord Teignmouth; now laughing heartily with Canning; now sighing over the table-talk of the Prince Regent; but above all, deep in tractarianism, and at the same time advocating the freedom of the poor negroes; which was by no means the case with all persons of his way of thinking, political or religious.

'About a year and three-quarters ago,' says this worthy ultra-serio-comic person, 'I changed my residence, and found myself in the habitation which my family now occupies, and which we find more salubrious than Clapham Common. We are just one mile from the turnpike-gate at Hyde Park Corner, which I think you will not have forgotten yet, having about three acres of pleasure-ground around my house, or rather behind it, and several old trees, walnut and mulberry, of thick foliage. I can sit and read under their shade, which I delight in doing, with as much admiration of the beauties

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

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of nature (remembering at the same time the words of my favourite poet: "Nature is but a name for an effect, whose cause is God"), as if I were two hundred miles from the great city.'

This is excellent, and would have been more so if Mr Wilberforce could have allowed others, not quite of the same creed, to have the same right to a comfortable enjoyment of nature, and the same reputation for piety. He was of opinion that you must be continually thinking of God, otherwise God would be very angry. As if the Divine Father could not dispense with these eternal references to him from his children, or would burthen them with the weight of even too much gratitude! Our prosperous and lively-blooded saint, however, bore the burthen with singular vivacity, owing to a notion he had (hardly burthened with modesty, though he always professed to wonder at the circumstance), that he was a special favourite of God.

His meditations down Kensington-road were certainly very different from those of Mr Wilkes.

'Walked,' he says, in his Diary, 'from Hyde Park Corner, repeating the 119th Psalm, in great comfort.'

This is the longest of the psalms, extending to a hundred and seventy-six verses, full of pious self-congratulation, and of rebukes of its deriders.

An anecdote of Wilberforce in connexion with the present royal family we reserve for our notices of the Palace.

Of the successors of this devout person in the occupancy of Gore House so much has been said of late, in consequence of the appearance of a book in three large octavo volumes, entitled 'The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington,' that readers of a work like the present will probably expect us to give our opinion on the subject at greater length, than would otherwise have been the case.*

Marguerite Gardiner (not Blessington, as the author has it, misled by the way in which peeresses sign their names) was the daughter of Edmund Power, Esq., a country gentleman of small property in Ireland, and was born at Knockbril, near Clonmel, in the county of Tipperary, on the 1st of September 1790. Her father appears to have been a man half mad with brutality. At the age of fourteen and a half, she was married to a captain in the army, of the name of Farmer, whose temper is said to have resembled her father's, and from whom she separated; and, in her eight-and-twentieth year, she took for her second husband, Charles John (Gardiner), Earl of Blessington, who was a man equally half mad with

* The feelings of the book, as far as the chief persons in it are concerned, are in the main correct; and the author might have attained the repute of moderate powers of reflection and an altogether laudable object; but the three volumes ought, at the utmost, to have been two; and the manufactured nature of the rest (to say nothing worse of it) should have rendered him cautious how he went out of his way to censure judgments which he does not understand.

self-will, though in a quieter shape, with the addition of prodigality and love of show. All these persons helped to perplex and unsettle her character.

During a space of eight years, Lord and Lady Blessington travelled and resided on the Continent —chiefly in Italy—accompanied by a niece of her Ladyship's, and by Count Alfred d'Orsay, son of General Count d'Orsay, one of the old French *noblesse.* The young Count was invited to be of the party by Lord Blessington, who became so extremely attached to him that nothing would content him but Alfred must marry one of his daughters by a former wife (he did not care which), and so become possessed of a portion of his estates. His Lordship, also, after the death of his only legitimate son, made him guardian of the son's brother. Alfred, in the year 1827, at Naples, married the daughter, without love on either side. Lord Blessington died of apoplexy in the year 1829, at Paris. His widow, with Count and Countess Alfred, returned to England, and took up her abode in Seamore Place, May Fair, where she resided till the year 1836, in the course of which time the married couple parted, having lived together ten years; and, on Lady Blessington's removal from Seamore Place to Kensington, the Count accompanied her thither; and, from that time up to their departure from England, appears to have resided in the same house, with the exception of

a short stay at the little domicile before mentioned. Lady Blessington was then in her forty-fifth year, and the Count in his thirty-fourth.

The house soon became a point of attraction, particularly in the world of letters, her Ladyship, besides giving such dinners as Dr Johnson would have thought 'being worth asking to,' delighting to bring men of different opinions together, for the purpose of softening asperities, and making them take a liking to one another, on better acquaintance. In this benevolent project she was assisted by the Count; and here, accordingly, with somewhat of an excess on the side of universality, were to be seen poets and prose writers, both Tory and Whig, distinguished journalists, Edinburgh and Quarterly reviewers, with actors, artists, travellers, exiles, etc., Landor and Thomas Moore being the leaders among the poets, and Prince Louis Napoleon at the head of the exiles. Every celebrated novelist, in particular, naturally made one of a circle, over which presided the charming woman, who was herself a novelist.

We do not hear of ladies among the visitors, though the Countess appears to have had cordial female friends. This was a defect, however, that was to be looked for in a country like England, in consequence of appearances — the residence in the same house of a beautiful widow of five-and-forty, with a model of a man aged thirty-four, suggesting,

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it seems, no possibilities of self-restraint to the sober fancies of our beloved countrymen. Yet, in his last days, when the hand of death was upon him, the Count said to their friend and biographer, the tears, all the while, pouring down his face, 'She was to me a mother! a dear, dear mother! a true loving mother to me!' And referring to her again, he said, 'You understand me.' 'I understood him to be speaking what he felt,' continues his friend; 'and there was nothing in his accents, in his position, or his expressions (for his words sounded in my ears like those of a dying man), which led me to believe he was seeking to deceive himself or me.'

These parties at Gore House have been compared with those of Holland House, and with the companies that assembled at the mansion of Lady Charleville. Of the latter, no memorialist has enabled us to speak; but, with the former, they appear to have had little in common, except the power on the part of some of the visitors to have furnished it, had the hostess so desired. It is stated that she latterly assumed too dictatorial a manner, and that the parties were not so natural and so lively as they had been in Seamore Place. This may have been owing, partly to her pursuit of literature, and partly to a sense of the coming difficulties; and there was one drawback on the agreeableness of the society, and even on the benevolence of purpose above mentioned, in bringing

COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON

it together, which we should not have expected to find in any society of the like description—to wit, a love of banter, and a habit of what is called 'fetching out' people's absurdities and self-committals; a practice, generally speaking, which none are so prompt to be offended with as the 'fetchers out.' But the habit, instead of being discouraged, was flattered; and flattery, of one kind or another, was the ruin of the poor handsome Count and Countess. Nobody, of course, contemplated such a result; and the flattery was very natural; for they were accomplished as well as handsome and kind-hearted persons, notwithstanding that mistake.

The establishment broke down in 1849 under a load of debt for party-giving, for dress, for jewellery, for play (on the part of the Count), and even for charity's self and the giving of pensions; both the friends being bountiful to the poor, one of them supporting poor relations, and the other helping to do as much for poor exiles. For though it is rightly said that people ought to be just before they are generous, yet when tradesmen give long credits, reckoning upon enormous receipts, their unreflecting victims naturally suppose they can 'wait,' and that the poor had better be helped first. The Count's boots and hats were advertisements, for the sake of which the shoemakers and hatters were content to wait, till things looked awkward; and then the long credit, having served

the purpose of an usurious patience, was to be made the ground of a realising exasperation.

The downfall was unlooked for by the public, but not by acquaintances. Four years previous to it the Count was so embarrassed, that in a schedule of his liabilities drawn up by himself, the claims of his creditors amounted to a hundred and seven thousand pounds; and his biographer adds, that there were debts to friends, amounting probably to thirteen thousand more. In vain the Countess kept an eye on the household expenses; in vain she thought to turn a jointure of two thousand a-year into four thousand, by 'literature'; in vain the Count resorted even to alchemy; in vain, as a last resource, he thought to benefit by those fine arts, in which he excelled as an amateur. Time was not given him for the trial. He had fled to Paris; there was a sale of the goods at Gore House; the Countess followed him; and the last hope of the refugees was in the Prince President of the French Republic, lately the favourite guest at their table, always their *protégé* and type of progress. But the man of the reserved tongue and drooping eyelids was plotting his way to a throne. He liked neither the sincerity, nor the humanity, of his once cherished adviser, the Count; and having discarded his mistress, and looked for a wife, he probably affected a new kind of reserve with the Countess, as a setter of imperial example. The poor lady died of apoplexy;

which, under certain kinds of trial, means a shock of despair; and the gentleman only received an appointment, when it was too late for him to discharge it. Strong and fine a man as he had been, he speedily followed her to the grave, aged no more than fifty-one.

The secret of the unlooked-for deaths of these two remarkable persons will still be a subject for discussion; nor do we profess to be in the least degree acquainted with it, unless it be explained by appearances. In our opinion, these are quite sufficient for the explanation. They had taken Louis Napoleon for a man of feeling, and they thought they should die dishonoured, or doubted, by creditors —and by creditor friends; for the proceeds of the sale of Gore House did not amount to more than the Count's debts to his friends, and what would clamorous tradesmen say to those? The Countess, also, was to subsist; and what was she to do for the Count, or he for her? Injured in hope, in health, and in expectation, their pangs of mind, under all the circumstances, may naturally have been enough to kill them; and we believe they did.*

* It is proper to observe, that the opinions here expressed regarding Louis Napoleon's behaviour to the Count and Countess originate in statements made by their friends, and that a counter-statement on his part might, of course, demand for them a new consideration. We are loth also to say anything against the ally of England and the guest of the Queen; and willing to believe, notwithstanding his antecedents, that he not only desires to promote the new cordiality between France and

As to the other and more delicate secret, nothing perhaps is or can be known of it, beyond the fact of their having lived in the same house; which, if considered a scandal in England, and of evil example (and it undoubtedly was so considered, and very naturally), is to be judged at the same time with reference to those foreign usages, to which one of them had been born and bred, and the other (in residences abroad) accustomed.

The Count's high-born and respected kindred—his mother included—never ceased to express their esteem and affection for the Countess; female relations of hers, themselves esteemed by the estimable, lived with her, and were witnesses of her habits; and if it be asked us, whether we are still 'green' enough to believe that there was nothing in the connection beyond the ill-appearance of it, we answer, that we leave those to believe the worst, who choose it; that a brave man's tears, in his dying moments, go a great way with us; that Irish and French vivacity combined, in a grave country, might be tempted or provoked into hazarding an amount of misconstruction, inconceivable to our

England out of motives better than merely selfish ones, but has objects, rare for a despot, in furtherance of the good of the poor and the general progress of the community. But those antecedents, and the melancholy doubts taught us by history, forbid the best-disposed of his observers to take promises for performance, or one set of extremes for another. The utmost which they find it possible to do, is to await the evidence of events, and to feel no wonder in the meantime at the incredulity of the consistent and the outraged.

national habits; and, finally, that till the nation itself is bold and virtuous enough to look into the cause of certain other habits of its own, which it suffers to scandalise its towns and cities in open day, beyond those of any other country in Europe, it had better draw as little attention as possible to comparisons between itself and its neighbours.

The worst thing known of Count d'Orsay, is his marriage with a girl of fifteen, without love on either side, in compliance with the wish of a half insane father, and for the purpose of obtaining a fortune. In an Englishman, this would have been very bad conduct indeed, and often is. At least, similar things are often done among us, if not precisely under the same circumstances. In a Frenchman, the conduct would be equally bad, if he reflected upon it apart from national custom; but custom in France, or in Paris (which is France itself, as affects the world), has rendered marriage in general not only a matter of understood expediency, but of an expediency very different from our own, both as regards the restraints of its antecedents, and the independence of its results. In England, the expediency is practised, but with conditions as inexorable on one side, as they are lax on the other; and hence, among other causes, the national scandal above alluded to.

But enough of these questions in a book not intended to moot them. It is creditable to Count

COUNT D'ORSAY

d'Orsay and to his friends in general, that whatever fears he may have had of exceptions in particular instances, they retained a belief in his good qualities to the last, and this too not only in spite of his pecuniary difficulties, but even of the obligations which they led him to incur. It was a piece of good fortune, which many a poor honest man must at once have rejoiced in and have envied—rejoiced in, to think that good intentions are not always to be doubted from inability to carry them out; and envied, because it was out of his power to cut the same redeeming figure of personal and aristocratical enchantingness.

In the interest occasioned by the rest of her story, we have forgotten to speak of the Countess as a writer; and much need not be said. She had an easy, elegant, and sometimes interesting pen; had the art of recommending liberal and amiable opinions without offending conventionality; and wrote better than any one else on the character of her acquaintance, Lord Byron. But her works are not original or strong enough to last.

The ground on which Gore House stands forms part of the district which is to be occupied by the new National Gallery, its schools of art and science, and its bowers for the exhibition of sculpture. A display of cabinet work and of studies from the schools of art has already commenced operations, and the public are re-admitted to the grounds. All

this, it must be allowed, is a good absorption of the antecedent individualities, pleasant as some of them were; though it is to be doubted, whether Mr Wilberforce's ghost will be quite easy at the sight of the Venuses and Apollos.*

England, a teacher of nations in so many respects, is but now discovering, what has so long been known to Italy and partially known to France—that utility and beauty, instead of being antagonists, are friends; that the one without the other, besides being in danger of falling into the gross and the sordid, cannot thoroughly work out its purposes; form, and proportion, and adaptation of means to ends, being constituent qualities of the beautiful; and finally, that as Nature, far from disliking the beautiful, thought fit to be the cause of it, and loves it, and deals in it to profusion, often in the very humblest of her productions, so it becomes Art to imitate her great mistress in the like impartiality of adornment, and show us what opulence and what elevation, in the scale of discerning beings, await the perceptions of those, whose ideas are not limited to the commonest forms of the desirable. The use

* The observations which here follow on the cultivation of the Beautiful, are retained in the present book, though they were suggested by a transient exhibition, the observations on which are retained for the same reason; namely, because it is hoped they refer sufficiently to general principles to warrant the retention of the particulars. It is hoped, also, that they may be considered a foretaste of what the locality is intended to do for us in succeeding exhibitions.

of art itself is but to administer to our satisfactions; and the use of beauty is to refine and perfect those satisfactions, and raise them by degrees, in proportion as we cultivate a true sense of it, to thoughts of the beauty and goodness of its great First Cause. To ask with a sneer what is the use of beauty, is to ask with impiety why God has filled the universe with beauty; why he has made the skies blue, and the fields green, and vegetation full of flowers, and the human frame a model for the sculptor, and gifted everything in existence with shape and colour. The commonest piece of grass, with the straightness of its stem, the flowing contrast of its leaves, and the trembling fulness of its ears, is a miracle of beauty:—so rich in grace and suggestiveness has it pleased Him to make the houses of the very insects, and the food of cattle! Is it not better to discern this, in addition to the other uses of grass, than to see in it nothing but those uses? nothing but hay for the market, and so much return of money to the grower? Very good things both, no doubt, and not to be dispensed with; but so much the more requiring the accompaniment of nobler perceptions, to hinder us from concluding that man was made to live by 'bread alone'; that is to say, by the satisfaction of his material, as opposed to his spiritual wants. So little was this the conclusion of the good Emperor and philosopher, Marcus Antoninus, that with the uncontemptuous eye of a

sage, and with a curious familiar anticipation of that sense of the picturesque which has been thought, by some, peculiar to modern times, he directs our attention to the outside of a very loaf, as possessing something graceful and attractive in its ruggedness, or what an artist would call the 'freedom of its forms.' The whole passage in his 'Meditations,' is itself so beautiful, and in spite of his want of thorough artistic perception as to form and line, expands into such a comprehensive and noble sense of what has been termed the Art of Nature, that although we have already kept the reader standing much longer than we intended at the steps of Gore House with this prefatory digression on such matters, we are sure he will be pleased at having it laid before him.

'Such things as ensue upon what is well constituted by nature, have something graceful and attractive. Thus, some parts of a well-baked loaf will crack and become rugged. What is thus cleft beyond the design of the baker, looks well and invites the appetite. So when figs are at the ripest, they begin to crack. Thus in full ripe olives, their approach to putrefaction gives the proper beauty to the fruit. Thus, the ladened ear of corn hanging down, the stern brow of the lion, and the foam flowing from the mouth of the boar, and many other things, considered apart, have nothing comely; yet because of their connection with things natural, they adorn them, and delight the spectator. Thus, to one who

has a deep affection of soul, and penetrates into the constitution of the whole, scarce anything connected with nature will fail to recommend itself agreeably to him. Thus, the real vast jaws of savage beasts will please him, no less than the imitations of them by painters or statuaries.

'With like pleasure, will his chaste eyes behold the maturity and grace of old age in man or woman, and the inviting charms of youth. Many such things will he experience, not credible to all, but only to those who have the genuine affection of soul to nature, and her works.'*

Yes, most excellent Emperor! and the same might have been said by thee, and probably was said, of the commonest objects of art round about thee, in thy home and thy goods and chattels, thy cabinets and caskets and chains; for art is nature's doing also, being the work of her workmanship; man and all forms and graces being referable to her suggestion. The chair, as well as the plant, has its straight and its flowing lines; the casket and the cabinet its ornaments of fruit and foliage, its efflorescence in metal or precious stone; some, their figures of men, beasts, and birds; and all, more or less, their colours, proportions, and uses.

Shall we not then observe, and, as much as possible, *spiritualise* them accordingly, giving them

* 'Translation of the Meditations.' Glasgow, 1749.

the grace and beauty which Nature suggests, and so rendering them assistants of our best perceptions against our worst? For effeminacy, the danger of delight, is not a consequence of enjoyments founded in truth and in the spirit of things, but of grovellings in the false and the gross; not a consequence, therefore, of good art, but of bad; of art lulling to sleep on the chair for the mere body's sake, and not of art awakening us to intellectual perceptions, and thus dividing the empire of body with that of mind.

Luther was not the less prepared to hazard martyrdom, because he was a player on the organ. Socrates was not the less an actual martyr, and one of the greatest of men, because he had been a sculptor, and wrought figures of the Graces.

All good things, as well as all bad things, hold together; truth, strength, right perceptions in art; falsehood, weakness, bad taste. Truth, in any one respect, is good for truth in other respects; and it would be ridiculous to avoid cultivating anything which is right, for fear of its degenerating into what is wrong. Upon this principle we might discommend the teaching of virtue itself, lest it turn sour, and become austerity or hypocrisy. Our duty is to do our best, and leave the rest to Providence.

The collection at Gore House, besides tapestry, mirrors, and a few other things, consists of cabinet

work in oak, walnut, ebony, etc., carved, sculptured, inlaid, sometimes with pictures, oftener in the Buhl style of ornamentation; in short, presenting all the reigning styles of treatment from the latter part of the fifteenth century to the close of the eighteenth. There are cabinets, coffers, commodes, buffets, chairs, tables, clocks, drawers, presses, couches, flower-stands, fire-screens, and even pairs of bellows. The rooms, in fact, are not big enough to hold them; so that the visitors are crowded; and as the materials are chiefly dark and ponderous, the general effect, notwithstanding occasional gorgeousness, is heavy, and even somewhat gloomy.

You might imagine that the fortunes of half-a-dozen ancient houses had been suddenly ruined, and their goods and chattels despatched in haste to an auctioneer's to be sold. Better justice would have been done to the individual objects, had there been space enough to show them; for all productions of art have so much to do with proportion, that the proportions even of the spaces round about them become of importance to their display. Perhaps, however, it was not easy to refuse offers from contributors; variety, too, was a temptation; and a liberal abundance is welcome, after all, even at the expense of inconvenience.

The Government Commissioners, with great judgment, have drawn attention to these curiosities, not as models for indiscriminate imitation, but as illus-

trations of the taste of successive periods; as samples of merit on particular points, especially ornamentation; and in several instances, as warnings against inconsistencies and bad taste. Foreigners, they say, can teach the English workman nothing in point of mechanical fitness and completion, but he may learn much from them in the art of decoration. This, no doubt, is true; and we hope and believe that foreigners and nations will benefit one another by these exhibitions; the Englishman learning to make his cabinets elegant, and the Frenchman and Italian to make their keys turn smartly, and their drawers come forth without sticking.

We cannot greatly admire such things as Buhl work; elaborations of brass ornaments upon dark grounds. We prefer the inlayment of paintings, the additions of bas-reliefs, and the quaintest old carvings of human figures, fruits, etc., provided they have any truth of expression. Buhl is no company —has nothing to entertain us with, but its unnecessary flourishes.

Gilding is something, for it is a kind of sunshine. The jumble called rococo is, in general, detestable. A parrot seems to have invented the word; and the thing is worthy of his tawdriness and his incoherence. We confess, however, to a sneaking kindness for the shepherds and shepherdesses of the times of the Pompadours and the Madame du

Barrys. They were the endeavour of no-feeling to get at some feeling; 'to assume a virtue if they had it not'; to play at lovers, though they could only be gallants; nay, let us do our best for them, and say, it was the endeavour to conciliate the remnant of truth and simplicity lurking in their hearts, and to persuade themselves what a golden-age kind of people they were intended by nature to have been, provided only they could have had their own way, and luxurious suppers instead of bread and cheese.

Many of these extraordinary pieces of furniture are, nevertheless, excellent of their kind, those in the rococo style not excepted. There are cabinets and coffers truly worthy of holding treasure; tables, at which it would be an elevation of mind, as well as body, to sit; clocks, that symbolise the value of time (and not seldom its heaviness) by the multiplicity and weight of their ornamentation; and chairs, which sometimes render the request 'not to touch,' provoking; for how otherwise are we to test the smoothness of the 'Genoa velvet'; to taste the pleasure of sitting, as sovereigns and beauties sat; or comfortably to contemplate the very objects before us, considering that there are no seats in the rooms for visitors, and that pleasure itself is fatiguing?

Some interesting memories, also, are attached to these costly moveables. There is a magnificent

Chairs which sometimes render the request "not to touch" provoking.

writing-table, ostentatiously recording some of the projects of the famous busy-body, Beaumarchais, author of the comedy of 'Figaro'; a Buhl writing-table, that belonged to the De Retz family; a grand cabinet in *pietra dura* (precious stones), made expressly for Louis the Fourteenth; a carved Venetian coffer, that was the property of the first Earl of Dorset, the poet, the worthy precursor of Spenser; and another Venetian coffer, adorned in wonderful *alto relievo* with the story of Cæsar crossing the Rubicon, most life-like and masterly. The work is dated in the catalogue 'about 1560'; and the arms on the escutcheon (a lion rampant and a head in a cap) are stated to be 'unknown.' We know not the arms of Cæsar Borgia, otherwise the story is just like one of the allusions of that energetic miscreant. Or, might it have illustrated some lawless exploits of the Malatesta family, one of the most ferocious of whom was a great patron of art?

We have indulged ourselves at such length in these passing notices of art and manufacture, that we must dismiss, with a somewhat unpatriotic brevity, the other part of the Exhibition—the copies from originals and from Nature sent in by students of the various Government Schools of Art, established throughout the kingdom. Indeed, we could take no very long view of them, and therefore must not be understood as throwing any slur upon those

on which we are silent, when we say that we were most struck with the 'Flamingo' of Miss Olden (No. 10); the 'Madre Dolorosa' (from Carlo Dolce?), by Miss Gunthorp (No. 24); the 'Magdalen,' from Correggio, by Mr Bowen (No. 27); the 'Money-getter' (we know not from whom), by Mr Collinson (No. 32); 'Fruit,' by Mr Gibson (No. 47); the 'Study of Ornament in Colour,' by Mr Ellison (No. 101); and those after 'Cuyp and Crivelli' (each wrongly referred), by Mr Armytage. The 'Flamingo' is admirably coloured, only we wish he looked less like an ogre, with that long beak of his holding the eel. It is all true to nature, no doubt; but why need ornithological painters select only those moments? The 'Madre Dolorosa' is very dolorous, and well done; but we have little faith in the permanent dolour of those cheeks. This, however, is the original's fault, and not the copyist's. For the real, natural grief, the amiable, surprised, and patient regret, in the face of Correggio's 'Magdalen,' we are most thankful, because we feel certain that it brings the original before us; which cannot be said of a late beautiful engraving of the subject, very lovely, but not at all sorrowful. The 'Fruit' is partly bruised with its own ripeness, very true and beautiful. The 'Ornament in Colour' is truly graceful and consistent; hangs charmingly together; and the 'Cuyp and Crivelli' carry with them their testimony to the fidelity of the copies. These works

are all upstairs; chiefly, we believe, in the garrets. They look as if a parcel of artists had fallen in love with the maid-servants, and hung their dormitories with evidences of their homage.

Little need be said of the grounds belonging to Gore House. Turf and trees are good things, with or without flowers; and the grounds are of unexpected dimensions, considered as appurtenances to a suburban residence; but, as Johnson said of a dinner, that it was a good enough dinner, but 'not a dinner to invite a man to,' so it may be said of the Gore House grounds, that they hardly sustain the dignified announcement of being 'thrown open to the public'; especially as this 'throwing open' is confined to the visitors who have paid their way to the cabinet-work. You must think of the late fair possessor, Lady Blessington, to give an interest to their pathways.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE estates purchased by the Commissioners for the site and grounds of the new National Gallery include those just described, which consist of about twenty acres; and it will, probably, when all the purchases are completed, approach to a hundred. It widens as it goes south, and reaches to Old Brompton.

From this point to the town of Kensington we pass houses both old and new, some in rows, and some by themselves, enclosed in gardens. They are all more or less good; and the turnings out of them lead into a considerable district, which has lately been converted from nursery and garden-ground into more streets, and is called Kensington New Town. It is all very clean and neat, and astonishes visitors who a few years ago beheld scarcely a house on the spot. A pleasant hedge-lane, paved in the middle, and looking towards the wooded grounds of Gloucester Lodge, where Canning lived, leads out of it into Old Brompton. One street, which has no thoroughfare, is quite of

a stately character, though deformed at the corner with one of those unmeaning rounded towers, whose tops look like pepper-boxes, or, 'Trifles from Margate.' The smaller streets also partake of those improvements, both external and internal, which have succeeded to the unambitious, barrack-like streets of a former generation; nor in acquiring solidity, have they, for the most part, been rendered heavy and dumpy; the too common fault of new buildings in the suburbs. It is ridiculous to see lumpish stone balconies constructed for the exhibition of a few flower-pots; and doors, and flights of steps, big enough for houses of three stories, put to 'cottages' of one. Sometimes, in these dwarf suburban grandiosities, the steps look as weighty as half the building; sometimes the door alone reaches from the ground to the storey above it; so that 'cottages' look as if they were inhabited by giants, and the doorways as if they had been maximized, on purpose to enable them to go in.

This Kensington New Town lies chiefly between the Gloucester and Victoria Roads. Returning out of the latter into the high road, we pass the remainder of the buildings above noticed, and, just before entering Kensington itself, halt at an old mansion, remarkable for its shallowness compared with its width, and attracting the attention by the fresh look of its red and pointed brick-work. It

is called Kensington House, and surpasses Gore House in the varieties of its history; for it has been, first, the habitation of a king's mistress; then a school kept by an honest pedant, whom Johnson visited; then a French emigrant school, which had noblemen among its teachers, and in which the late Mr Sheil was brought up; then a Roman Catholic boarding-house, with Mrs Inchbald for an inmate; and now it is an 'asylum,' a term into which that consideration for the feelings which so honourably marks the progress of the present day, has converted the plain-spoken 'mad-house' of our ancestors.

The king's mistress was the once famous Duchess of Portsmouth, a Frenchwoman,—Louise de Querouaille,—who first came to England in the train of Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, the sister of Charles the Second. She returned; and remained, for the express purpose (it is said) of completing the impression she had made on Charles, and assisting the designs of Louis the Fourteenth and the Jesuits in making him a Papist, and reducing him to the treasonable condition of a pensioner on the French Court. Traitor and pensioner, at all events, his Majesty became, and the French woman became an English Duchess; but whether she was a party to the plot, or simply its unconscious instrument, she has hardly had justice done to her, we think, by the historians. She appears to have been a

THE DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH

somewhat silly person (Evelyn says she had a 'baby face'); she was bred in France at a time when it was a kind of sacred fashion to admire the mistresses of Louis the Fourteenth, and think them privileged concubines; she had probably learnt, in the convent where she was brought up, that lawless things might become lawful, to serve religious ends; and she was visited during her elevation by her own parents — straightforward, unaffected people, according to Evelyn—the father a 'good fellow,' who seems at once to have rejoiced in her position, and yet to have sought no advantages from it. The Duchess, it is true, ultimately got as much for herself as she could, out of the King. She was as lavish as he was; became poor, a gambler, and a *gourmande*; that is to say, gave way to every innocent propensity, as she might have thought it, which came across her; and as her occupation of the house at Kensington appears to have been subsequent to the reign of Charles, it probably took place on one of her visits to England during the reigns of William the Third and George the First; on which latter occasion she is supposed to have endeavoured to get a pension from the English Government—on what grounds it would be curious to know. But the 'baby face' probably thought it all right. We take her to have been a thoroughly conventional, commonplace person, with no notions

of propriety but such as were received at court, and quite satisfied with everything, here and hereafter, as long as she had plenty to eat, drink, and play at cards with, and a confessor to make all smooth, in case of collateral peccadilloes.* The jumble of things religious and profane was carried to such a height in those days, that a picture representing the Duchess and her son (the infant Duke of Richmond) in the characters of 'Virgin and Child,' was painted for a convent in France, and actually used as an altar-piece. They thought her an instrument in the hands of God for the restoration of Popery.

Adieu to the 'baby-face,' looking out of the windows at Kensington House, in hope of some money from King George; and hail to that of the good old pedagogue, James Elphinstone, reformer of spelling, translator of 'Martial,' and friend of Dr Johnson. He is peering up the road to see if his great friend is looming in the distance; for dinner is ready, and he is afraid that the veal stuffed with

* Our countrymen, who hated the Duchess because she was a Frenchwoman (and with reason, considering what was thought to be her mission), converted her name, Querouaille, into *Carwell*; which was nearer perhaps the French word than they fancied; for Brittany, her native province, received a portion of its inhabitants from Cornwall, where *Car* and *Huel* are component words; and it still presents names of places and persons corresponding with Cornish appellations. Among them is (or was, in the time of Madame de Sévigné) a family of the name of *Cornouailles*; which was sometimes written *Cornuel*, and is the way in which they spell the name of the English county.

plums (a favourite dish of the Doctor's) will be spoilt.

Mr Elphinstone prospered in his school, but failed in his reformation of spelling, which was on the phonetic principle (one of his books on the subject was entitled 'Propriety's Pocket Dictionary'), and he made such a translation of 'Martial,' that his friend Strahan, the printer—but the circumstance must be told out of Boswell.

GARRICK. 'Of all the translations that ever were attempted, I think Elphinstone's "Martial" the most extraordinary. He consulted me upon it, who am a little bit of an epigrammatist myself, you know. I told him freely, "You don't seem to have that turn." I asked him if he was serious; and finding he was, I advised him against publishing. Why, his translation is more difficult to understand than the original. I thought him a man of some talents; but he seems crazy in this.'

JOHNSON. 'Sir, you have done what I had not courage to do. But he did not ask my advice, and I did not force it upon him, to make him angry with me.'

GARRICK. 'But as a friend, Sir.'

JOHNSON. 'Why, such a friend as I am with him—no.'

GARRICK. 'But if you see a friend going to tumble over a precipice?'

JOHNSON. 'That is an extravagant case, Sir.

DAVID GARRICK

You are sure a friend will thank you for hindering him from tumbling over a precipice; but, in the other case, I should hurt his vanity, and do him no good. He would not take my advice. His brother-in-law, Strahan, sent him a subscription of fifty pounds, and said he would send him fifty more, if he would not publish.'

GARRICK. 'What, eh! is Strahan a good judge of an epigram? Is he not rather an obtuse man, eh?'

JOHNSON. 'Why, Sir, he may not be a judge of an epigram; but you see he is a judge of what is not an epigram.'

That our readers may judge for themselves, especially as the book is very rare, and nobody who speaks of Elphinstone quotes it, we add a specimen or two. We confess they are not 'favourable specimens'; but they are not unjust.

'TO THE SUBSCRIBER

'If Martial meekly woo'd Subscription's charms,
Subscription, gracious, met a Martial's arms;
Contagious taste illum'd th' imperial smile,
And, Julius' greater, Martial, won our ile.'

BOOK IV., PART II., EPIGRAM 16.

'ON APOLLODORUS—TO REGULUS

'Five for Ten, and for Lusty he greeted you Lean,
As for Free he saluted you Bond.
Now he, Ten, Free, and Lusty articulates clean.
Oh! what pains can! He wrote, and he conn'd.'

Not a word of explanation; though the book is

full of the longest and most superfluous comments. It is a quarto of six hundred pages, price a guinea in boards; and among its hundreds of subscribers are the leading nobility and men of letters. So prosperous had some real learning and a good character rendered the worthy schoolmaster.*

Elphinstone had won Johnson's heart by taking charge of a Scotch edition of the 'Rambler.' He also translated the Latin mottoes at the head of the papers; and did it in a manner that gave little or no token of the coming 'Martial.' Johnson, Jortin (of whom more hereafter), and, we believe, Franklin, visited him at this house.

'I am going this evening (says Johnson) to put young Otway to school with Mr Elphinstone.'†

Otway is an interesting name. One should like to know whether he was of the poet's race. It is pleasant, also, to fancy the Doctor, then in his sixty-fourth year, walking hand-in-hand down the road with the little boy.

'On Monday, April 19, 1773, he called on me,' says Boswell, 'with Mrs Williams, in Mr Strahan's coach, and carried me out to dine with Mr Elphin-

* 'The Epigrams of Mr Val. Martial, in Twelve Books: with a Comment, by James Elphinstone.' 1782. It is due to Mr Hookham to state, that we found this rare volume in his excellent, indeed unique, circulating library, which contains the miscellaneous reading of several generations.

† Letter to Mrs Thrale.

stone, at his academy at Kensington. Mr Elphinstone talked of a new book that was much admired, and asked Dr Johnson if he had read it.'

'I have looked into it.'

'What,' said Elphinstone, 'have you not read it through?'

Johnson, offended at being thus pressed, and so obliged to own his cursory mode of reading, answered tartly, 'No, Sir. Do you read books through?' *

The book that was 'much admired,' was probably one that differed with Boswell and the Doctor in opinion, otherwise his biographer, who is full of shabby suppressions of this kind, might have added the title, or not have mentioned the work at all.

It is said in Faulkner's 'History of Kensington,' that Elphinstone was 'ludicrously characterised in Smollett's "Roderick Random," which, in consequence, became a forbidden book in the school.' But none of the brutal schoolmasters of Smollett resemble the gentle pedagogue of Kensington. The book might have been forbidden out of consideration for the common character of the profession; to say nothing of other reasons.

* Croker's 'Boswell,' vol. viii. p. 267.

CHAPTER SIX

BUT we must not stop longer with Mr Elphinstone. Of the school kept by Jesuits, an account so entertaining has been left by Mr Sheil in the Memoirs prefixed to the volume of his Speeches, that, although it is somewhat long, the reader, we are sure, will be glad to have the whole of it, especially as it does not seem to be generally known, and the regrets of the world are yet fresh at the loss of that distinguished orator and Member of Parliament.

How the smile of the French Abbé, 'made up of guile and meekness,' could deserve to be called 'amiable, in the best sense of the word,' we cannot say. But nothing can surpass the descriptions of the rest of the little man, glossy all over with his black silk habiliments; of the emigrant schoolboys rejoicing in the victories obtained by the country which had

rejected them, at the expense of that which had given them shelter; and of poor unteachable Charles the Tenth, thrilling at the names of the little boys introduced to him, and not foreseeing that he would have to thrill at them over again, after repossessing the throne of France to no purpose.

'I landed at Bristol,' says Mr Sheil, recording his first coming from Ireland, 'and with a French clergyman, the Abbé de Grimeau, who had been my tutor, I proceeded to London. The Abbé informed me, that I was to be sent to Kensington House, a college established by the Pères de la Foi, for so the French Jesuits settled in England at that time call themselves; and that he had directions to leave me there upon his way to Languedoc, from whence he had been exiled in the Revolution, and to which he had been driven by the *maladie de pays* to return. Accordingly, we set off for Kensington House, which is situated exactly opposite the avenue leading to the Palace, and has the beautiful garden attached to it in front. A large iron gate, wrought into rusty flowers, and other fantastic forms, showed that the Jesuit school had once been the residence of some person of distinction; and I afterwards understood, that a mistress of Charles the Second lived in the spot which was now converted into one of the sanctuaries of Ignatius. It was a large, old-fashioned house, with many remains of decayed

splendour. In a beautiful walk of trees, which ran down from the rear of the building through the play-ground, I saw several French boys playing at swing-swang; and the moment I entered, my ears were filled with the shrill vociferations of some hundreds of little emigrants, who were engaged in their various amusements, and babbled, screamed, laughed, and shouted, in all the velocity of their rapid and joyous language. I did not hear a word of English, and at once perceived that I was as much amongst Frenchmen as if I had been suddenly transferred to a Parisian college. Having got this peep at the gaiety of the school, into which I was to be introduced, I was led with my companion to a chamber covered with faded gilding, and which had once been richly tapestried; where I found the head of the establishment, in the person of a French nobleman, Monsieur le Prince de Broglie. Young as I was, I could not help being struck at once with the contrast which was presented between the occupations of this gentleman and his name. I saw in him a little, slender, and gracefully constructed Abbé with a sloping forehead, on which the few hairs that were left him were nicely arranged, and well powdered and pomatumed. He had a gentle smile, full of suavity which was made up of guile and of weakness, but which deserved the designation of amiable, in the best sense of the word. His clothes were adapted with a peculiar nicety to his

symmetrical person; and his silk waistcoat and black stockings, with his small shoes buckled with silver, gave him altogether a glossy aspect. This was the son of the celebrated Marshal Broglie, who was now the head of a school, and notwithstanding his humble pursuits, was designated by everybody as "Monsieur le Prince."

'Monsieur le Prince had all the manners and attitudes of the Court, and by his demeanour put me at once in mind of the old *régime*. He welcomed my French companion with tenderness, and having heard that he was about to return to France, the poor gentleman exclaimed, "Hélas!" while the tears came into his eyes at the recollection of "cette belle France," which he was never, as he thought, to see again. He bade me welcome. These preliminaries of introduction having been gone through, my French tutor took his farewell; and as he embraced me for the last time, I well remember that he was deeply affected by the sorrow which I felt in my separation from him, and turning to Monsieur le Prince, recommended me to his care with an emphatic tenderness. The latter led me into the school-room, where I had a desk assigned to me beside the son of the Count Décar, who has since, I understand, risen to offices of very high rank in the French Court. His father belonged to the nobility of the first class. In the son, it would have been, at that time, difficult to detect his

patrician derivation. He was a huge, lubberly fellow, with thick matted hair, which he never combed. His complexion was greasy and sudorific, and to soap and water he seemed to have such a repugnance, that he did not, above once a week, go through any process of ablution. He was surly, dogged, and silent, and spent his time in the study of mathematics, for which he had a good deal of talent. I have heard that he is now one of the most fashionable and accomplished men about the Court, and that this Gorgonius smells now of the pastiles of Rufillus.*

'On the other side of me was a young French West Indian, from the colony of Martinique, whose name was Devarieux. The school was full of the children of the French planters, who had been sent over to learn English among the refugees from the Revolution. He was an exceedingly fine young fellow, the exact reverse in all his habits to Monsieur le Comte Décar on my left hand, and expended a good deal of his hours of study in surveying a small pocket-mirror, and in arranging the curls of his rich black hair, the ambrosial plenty of which was festooned above his temples, and fell profusely behind his head.

'Almost all the French West Indians were vain, foppish, generous, brave, and passionate. They ex-

* Pastillos Rufillus olet, Gorgonius hircum.

hibited many of the qualities which we ascribe to the natives of our own islands in the American Archipelago; they were a sort of Gallican Belcours in little; for with the national attributes of their forefathers, they united much of that vehemence, and habit of domination, which a hot sun and West India overseership are calculated to produce. In general, the children of the French exiles amalgamated readily with these Creoles: there were, to be sure, some points of substantial difference; the French West Indians being all rich *roturiers*, and the little emigrants having their veins full of the best blood of France, without a groat in their pockets. But there was one point of reconciliation between them—they all concurred in hating England and its government. This detestation was not very surprising in the West Indian French; but it was not a little singular, that the boys, whose fathers had been expelled from France by the Revolution, and to whom England had afforded shelter, and given bread, should manifest the ancient national antipathy, as strongly as if they had never been nursed at her bosom, and obtained their aliment from her bosom.

'Whenever news arrived of a victory won by Bonaparte, the whole school was thrown into a ferment; and I cannot, even at this distance of time, forget the exultation with which the sons of the decapitated, or the exile, hailed the triumph

of the French arms, the humiliation of England, and the glory of the nation whose greatness they had learned to lisp. There was one boy I recollect more especially. I do not now remember his name, but his face and figure I cannot dismiss from my remembrance. He was a little effeminate creature, with a countenance that seemed to have been compounded of the materials with which waxen babies are made; his fine flaxen hair fell in girlish ringlets about his face, and the exquisite symmetry of his features would have rendered him a fit model for a sculptor, who wished to throw the *beau ideal* of pretty boyhood into stone. He had upon him a sickly expression, which was not sufficiently pronounced to excite any disagreeable emotion, but cast over him a mournful look, which was seconded by the calamities of his family, and added to the lustre of misfortune which attended him. He was the child of a nobleman who had perished in the Revolution. His mother, a widow, who resided in a miserable lodging in London, had sent him to Kensington House, but it was well known that he was received there by the Prince de Broglie from charity; and I should add, that his eleemosynary dependence, so far from exciting towards him any of that pity which is akin to contempt, contributed to augment the feeling of sympathy which the disasters of his family had created in his regard. This unfortunate little boy was a Frenchman to his heart's core, and

whenever the country which was wet with his father's blood had added a new conquest to her possessions, or put Austria or Prussia to flight, his pale cheek used to flush into a hectic of exultation, and he would break into joyfulness at the achievements by whcih France was exalted, and the pride and power of England were brought down. This feeling, which was conspicuous in this little fellow, ran through the whole body of Frenchmen, who afforded very unequivocal proof of the sentiments by which their parents were influenced. The latter I used occasionally to see. Old gentlemen, the neatness of whose attire was accompanied by indications of indigence, used occasionally to visit Kensington House. Their elasticity of back, the frequency and gracefulness of their well-regulated bows, and the perpetual smile upon their wrinkled and emaciated faces, showed that they had something to do with the "vieille cour," and this conjecture used to be confirmed by the embrace with which they folded the little marquises and counts whom they came to visit.

'Kensington House was frequented by emigrants of very high rank. The father of the present Duke de Grammont, who was at this school, and was then Duke de Guiche, often came to see his son. I recollect upon one occasion having been witness to a very remarkable scene. Monsieur, as he was then called, the present King of France, waited one day, with a large retinue of French nobility, upon the

Prince de Broglie. The whole body of the school-boys was assembled to receive him. We were gathered in a circle at the bottom of a flight of stone stairs, that led from the principal room into the playground. The future King of France appeared, with his *cortège* of illustrious exiles, at the glass folding-doors which were at the top of the stairs, and the moment he was seen, we all exclaimed with a shrill shout of beardless loyalty, "Vive le Roi!" Monsieur seemed greatly gratified by this spectacle, and in a very gracious and condescending manner went down amongst the little boys, who were at first awed a good deal by his presence, but were afterwards speedily familiarised to him by the natural benignity of Charles the Tenth. He asked the names of those who were about him, and when he heard them, and saw in the boys by whom he was encompassed the descendants of some of the noblest families of France, he seemed to be sensibly affected. One or two names, which were associated with peculiarly melancholy recollections, made him thrill. "Hélas! mon enfant!" he used to say, as some orphan was brought up to him; and he would then lean down to caress the child of a friend who had perished on the scaffolds of the Revolution.'*

Poor Charles the Tenth! himself one of the least

* 'The Speeches of the Right Honourable Richard Lalor Sheil, M.P., with a Memoir, etc.' Edited by Thomas Macneven, Esq., Barrister-at-Law. 1845, p. 11.

of children in the greatest of schools, adversity; which he left, only to be sent back to it, and die.

While these extracts of ours respecting the schoolmaster and school-fellows of Mr Sheil have been going through the press, we have had the pleasure of seeing a piece of biography make its appearance, at once loving and candid, which enables us to add to them a highly characteristic portrait, in his school-days, of the distinguished Irishman himself. It was furnished to the author by a learned judge (Mr Justice Ball), who had been one of his school-fellows. 'His first appearance (he says) I recollect well; it was strikingly grotesque. His face was pale and meagre; his limbs lank; his hair starting upwards from his head like a brush; a sort of muscular action pervading his whole frame; his dress foreign; his talk broken English, and his voice a squeak. Add to this a pair of singularly brilliant eyes, lighting up all the peculiarities of his figure, and you have before you the boy Sheil. His performances were at first as singular as his person. His efforts to kick a football were *sui generis*. He never engaged in the game along with the other boys, but kept aloof, occupied in reading, or walking about the playground; but whenever the ball was thrown across his path, he used to dart at it with frantic energy, his legs and arms all pretty equally on the stretch, so that it was out of the question to determine

with what limb he would assail the ball, until a kick at it, probably from the left leg, solved the problem; and then back he would go to his reading, amid the yells of the urchins, enraged at his disturbing their game.'*

For characters of the full-grown Sheil, bodily and mental, who for the most part was a rare and most interesting compound of far-sighted judgment and immediate impulse, we must refer to the work itself. Sheil was not an unprosperous man; but he ought to have been still more prosperous, and lived to combine old age with a sort of perennial youth; for such was the tendency of his nature.

We know not how long the school of the Abbé de Broglie lasted; but in the year 1819, Kensington House was a Catholic boarding establishment, kept by a Mr and Mrs Salterelli.

'In the chapel,' says Boaden, in his 'Memoirs of Mrs Inchbald,' 'the Archbishop of Jerusalem performed mass regularly during the early part of his residence; and the Abbé Mathias officiated, when the Primate quitted the house. The society was extremely genteel and cheerful, changing, however, too frequently for perfect cordiality and the formation of intimacy. The Schiavonettis, however, seem to be acquaintances; and Mrs Beloe, and Mr Skeene

* 'Memoirs of the Right Honourable Richard Lalor Sheil.' By W. Torrens M'Cullagh, author of the 'Industrial History of Free Nations, etc.' Vol. i. p. 23.

from Aberdeen, were old friends, who, on their arrival, met with an unlooked-for pleasure—the celebrated artists, Mr and Mrs Cosway, upon leaving Stratford Place, were at Kensington House from August to October, before they settled upon a house in the Edgeware Road.'*

Here Mrs Inchbald spent the last two years of her life; and here, on the 1st of August 1821, she died; we fear—how shall we say it of so excellent a woman, and in the sixty-eighth year of her age?—of tight-lacing. But she had been very handsome, was still handsome, was growing fat, and had never liked to part with her beauty. Who that is beautiful does?

'The health of Mrs Inchbald,' says her biographer, 'was very indifferent this year (1819); and her spirits sympathised with her frame. In the month of March, she was a good deal disturbed by the symptoms of a complaint, which intermitted, but never entirely left her. After undressing for bed, she felt a sensation of tightness in her waist, which she naturally enough attributed to the habit of drawing rather too closely the strings of her under apparel.'†

And after her death, he says: 'As we cannot speak professionally, we shall only say, that it seems probable the tightness of which she formerly com-

* Vol. ii. p. 260.
† P. 262.

plained was the indication of that malady (internal inflammation) which did not quit the frame, though it remitted its attacks, and, latent, awaited only the excitement of a cold to render her recovery impracticable.'

We have dwelt a little on this point, as a warning; if tight-lacers can take warning. We almost fear they would sooner quote Mrs Inchbald as an excuse than an admonition. But, at all events beauties of sixty-eight may, perhaps, consent to be a little startled.

If this was a weakness in Mrs Inchbald, let tight-lacers resemble her in other respects, and if their rickety children can forgive them, the rest of the world may very heartily do so. Mrs Inchbald never had any children, to need their forgiveness. She was a woman of rare endowments: a beauty, a dramatist, a novelist, a successful actress; yet possessed of virtue so rare, that she would practise painful self-denial in order to afford deeds of charity. Her acting was, perhaps, of the sensible, rather than artistical sort; and though some of her plays and farces have still their seasons of re-appearance on the stage, she was too much given as a dramatist to theatrical and sentimental effects—too melo-dramatic; but her novels are admirable, particularly the 'Simple Story,' which has all the elements of duration—invention, passion, and thorough truth to

* P. 275.

nature in word and deed. To balance the advantages which she possessed over other people, she must needs have had some faults; and we take them (besides the tight-lacing) to have been those of temper and stubbornness. Charles Lamb speaks of her, somewhere, as the 'beautiful vixen.' The word must surely have been too strong for such a woman; who is said to have possessed both the respect and affection of all who knew her. If our memory does not deceive us, he applies it to her upon an occasion when she might well have been angry, and when she thought herself bound to resort to measures of self-defence, physical as well as moral. A distinguished actor who was enamoured of her, and who seems to have been a warmer lover off the stage than he was upon it, persisted one day in forcing upon her salutations which appeared so alarming, that the lady seized him by the pigtail, and tugged it with a vigour so efficacious, as forced him to desist in trepidation. She related the circumstance to a friend, adding, with a touch of her comic humour, which must have been heightened by the difficulty of getting out the words (for she stammered sometimes), 'How lucky that he did not w-w-wear a w-w-w-wig!'

Mrs Inchbald lived in several other houses in Kensington, which shall be noticed as we pass them; for the abodes of the authoress of the 'Simple Story' make classic ground.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WE have now come to Kensington High Street, and shall take our way on the left-hand side of it, continuing to do so through the whole town, and noticing the streets and squares that branch out of it as we proceed. We shall then turn at the end of the town, and come back by Holland House, Campden House, and Kensington Palace and Gardens.

On our right hand, over the way, is the Palace Gate with its sentinels; and opposite this gate, where we are halting, is a sturdy, good-sized house, a sort

of undergrown mansion, singularly so for its style of building, and looking as if it must have been the work of Vanbrugh, one of whose edifices will be noticed further on. It is just in his 'no nonsense' style; what his opponents called 'heavy'; but very sensible and to the purpose; built for duration. It is only one storey high, and looks as if it had been made for some rich old bachelor, who chose to live alone, but liked to have everything about him strong and safe.

Such was probably the case, for it is called Colby House, after a baronet of that name, who lived in the time of George the First, and who appears to have been a man of humble origin, and a miser. A spectator of the house might imagine, that the architect was stopped, when about to commence a third storey, in order to save the expense. Dr King, the Jacobite divine, who knew Colby, and who thinks he was a commissioner in the Victualling Office, says (in his 'Literary and Political Anecdotes of His Own Times') that the baronet killed himself by rising in the middle of the night, when he was in a profuse perspiration (the consequence of a medicine taken to that effect), and going downstairs for the key of the cellar, which he had inadvertently left on the table. 'He was apprehensive that his servants might seize the key, and rob him of a bottle of his port wine.'

'This man,' adds the Doctor, 'died intestate, and

left more than £200,000 in the funds, which was shared among five or six day-labourers, who were his nearest relations.'

> 'Who sees pale Mammon pine amidst his store,
> Sees but a backward steward for the poor.'

The High Street of Kensington, though the place is so near London, and contains so many new buildings, has a considerable resemblance to that of a country town. This is owing to the moderate size of the houses, to their general style of building (which is that of a century or two ago), and to the curious, though not obvious, fact, that not one of the fronts of them is exactly like another. It is also neat and clean; its abutment on a palace associates it with something of an air of refinement; and the first object that presents itself to the attention, next after the sentinels at the Palace Gate, is a white and pretty lodge, at the entrance of the new road leading to Bayswater. The lodge, however, is somewhat too narrow. The road is called Kensington Palace Gardens, and is gradually filling with mansions, some of which are in good taste and others in bad, and none of them have gardens, to speak of; so that the spectator does not well see why anybody should live there, who can afford to live in houses so large.

Pleasant, however, as the aspect of High Street is on first entering it, the eye has scarcely caught sight

of the lodge just mentioned, when it encounters a sore in the shape of some poor Irish people hanging about, at the corner of the first turning on the left hand. They look like people from the old broken-up establishment of Saint Giles's, and probably are so; a considerable influx from the Rookery in that quarter having augmented the Rookery in this; for so it has alike been called. This Rookery has long been a nuisance in Kensington. In the morning you seldom see more of it than this indication of its entrance; but in the evening, the inmates mingle with the rest of the inhabitants out-of-doors, and the naked feet of children, and the ragged and dissolute looks of men and women, present a painful contrast to the general decency. We understand, however, that some of these poor people are very respectable of their kind, and that the improvements which are taking place in other portions of the kingdom, in consequence of the attention so nobly paid of late years to the destitute and uneducated, have not been without effect in this quarter. The men for the most part are, or profess to be, labouring bricklayers, and the women, market-garden women. They are calculated, at a rough guess, to amount to a thousand; all crammed, perhaps, into a place which ought not to contain above a hundred. The reader, from late and painful statements on these subjects, knows how they must dwell. The place is not much in sight.

Some poor Irish people hanging about the corners.

You give a glance, and a guess at it, as you look down the turning, and so pass on. There was a talk, not long since, of bringing the new road just mentioned, from over the way, and continuing it through the spot, so as to sweep it clean of the infection, as in the case of New Holborn and St Giles's; and in all probability the improvement will take place; for one advance brings another, and Kensington has become of late so much handsomer as well as larger, that it will hardly leave this ugly blemish on its beauty. But leases must expire, and lettings and sub-lettings for poor people die hard.

Most of this unhappy multitude are Roman Catholics. Their priests tell us of a fine house at Loretto in Italy, which the Virgin Mary lived in at Nazareth, and which angels brought from that place into the dominions of the Pope. They also tell us, that miracles never cease; at least, not in Roman Catholic hands; and that nobody feels for the poor as they do. What a pity that they could not join these feelings, these hands, and these miracles, and pray a set of new houses into England for the poor bricklayers!

Continuing our way from this inauspicious corner, we come to the turning at Young Street, which leads into Kensington Square, formerly as important a place in this suburb, as Grosvenor Square was in the metropolis.

Kensington Square occupies an area of some hundred and fifty feet, and was commenced in the reign of James the Second, and finished towards the close of that of William. It is now a place of obsolete-looking, though respectable houses, such as seem made to become boarding-schools, which some of them are; and you cannot help thinking it has a desolate air, though all its houses are inhabited. In the reigns of William, and Anne, and the first two Georges, Kensington Square was the most fashionable spot in the suburbs; it was filled with frequenters of the Court, and these are the identical homes which they inhabited. Faulkner says, that 'at one time, upwards of forty carriages were kept in and about the neighbourhood'; and that, 'in the time of George the Second, the demand for lodgings was so great, that an ambassador, a bishop, and a physician were known to occupy apartments in the same house.'

The earliest distinguished name of an inhabitant of this spot, in the parish-books, is that of the Duchess of Mazarin, in the year 1692. We know not which house she lived in; but the reader must imagine her, after the good French fashion, taking her evening walk in the Square, the envy of surrounding petticoats, accompanied by a set of English and French gallants, Villierses, Godolphins, Ruvignys, etc., among whom is her daily visitor, and constant, adoring old friend, Saint Evremond,

The Rookery

with his white locks, little skull cap, and the great wen on his forehead. He idolises her to the very tips of her fingers, though she borrowed his money, which he could ill afford—and gambled it away besides, which he could not but pray her not to do. He also begged her to resist the approaches of *usquebaugh.*

The Duchess was then six-and-forty, an Italian, with black hair, and, according to his description of her, still a perfect beauty. Fielding thought her so when she was younger, for he likens Sophia Western to her portrait.

Hortensia Mancini was niece of Cardinal Mazarin, at whose death (to use her own words, in the 'Memoirs' which she dictated to Saint Real) she became 'the richest heiress, and the unhappiest woman, in Christendom'; that is to say, she found she had got a jealous, mean bigot for her husband, who grudged her a handsome participation of the money which he obtained with her. And as this was touching her on the tenderest point, she ran away from him in pure desperation, to see how she could enjoy herself elsewhere, and what funds to pay for it she could get out of him, by disclosing their quarrels to the world. The Duke (his name was Meilleraye, but he took the name of Mazarin when he married her) was inexorable, and not to be scandalised out of his meanness; so his wife, after divers wanderings, which got her scandalised

in her turn, came into England on pretence of visiting her cousin Mary of Este, Duchess of York; but, in reality, to get a pension from Charles the Second. This she did, to the amount of four thousand a year, every penny of which was probably grudged by the lavish king himself, who could not afford it, and who is said to have been disgusted by her falling in love with another man the moment she got it. Charles, when in exile, had sued for Hortensia's hand in vain, from her uncle the Cardinal, who thought the royal prospects hopeless, and who was in fear of the Protector. Madame de Mazarin, however, continued to flourish among the ladies at Whitehall, during Charles's reign; she had half her pension confirmed to her by King William; did nothing, from first to last, but keep company, and gamble it away; and six years after her residence at Kensington, died so poor, at a small house in Chelsea (the last, as you go from London, in Paradise Row), that her body was detained by her creditors till her husband redeemed it. The husband embalmed it; and, surviving her many years, is said (which is hardly credible) to have carried it about with him all that time, wherever he went, as if determined on having the woman with him dead, who could not 'abide' him while she was living.

Madame de Mazarin has been so praised by Saint Evremond for every kind of good quality except

prudence in money matters, and occasional fits of ill-humour, that, with all due allowance for the dotages to which old men are subject, and for his particular delight, as a French exile, in finding at

her house a female friend, and a society with whom he could spend his evenings, it is not easy to coincide with the general opinion, which sets her down as a woman destitute of everything attractive, except her beauty. She probably understood his wit, and enjoyed it to his heart's content; for she appears

to have had taste and reflection enough to hold no mean part in conversation; and this would hinder her from falling into the common mistake of beauties, and thinking she could dispense with the wish to please. She used to intimate that her friends would regret her when she was gone; and St Evremond appears heartily to have done so, though she borrowed hundreds out of his savings, and kept him in constant fright with her losses. The Duchess had been a spoilt child, and her hand was bestowed on a foolish man. When she was a girl, she tells us that she and her sisters one day threw upwards of three hundred louis out of window, for the pleasure of seeing a parcel of footmen scramble and fight for them. They must have been louis d'ors, or so many pounds sterling, a sum worth two or three times the amount at present; she says, that the amusement was thought to have hastened her uncle's death. She was afterwards accused, while in a convent, where her husband had succeeded in 'stowing' her for a time, of putting ink into the holy-water box (to smut the nuns' faces), and of frightening them out of their sleep at night, by running through the dormitory with a parcel of little dogs, yelping and howling. She says that these stories were either inventions or exaggerations; but we are strongly disposed to believe them. We mention the convent, because as such places are again subjects of conversation in this

country, and matters of concern to our families, it may be useful to know what kind of scenes they have witnessed, comic as well as tragic.

But we must quit this glimpse of the days of Charles the Second, for a personage who suggests a wholly different set of ideas, his figure having been unwieldy, and his dulness unfortunately no less conspicuous than his good morals. Here, somewhere about the south-west corner of the Square, lived, for several years, physician to King William the Third, and butt of all the wits of the time, Sir Richard Blackmore. Johnson said they hated him more for his morals than his dulness; but though most of them were far from being immaculate, it was not in the nature of any of them to hate a man for what was good in him, much less of such persons as Garth and Steele. The truth is, that Blackmore began the warfare by attacking the wits; and as he wrote heaps of dull poetry, it was not to be expected that they should spare their assailant merely because his clumsy blows were dealt as heavily as he could bestow them, out of a good motive. They might even doubt the entire goodness of motive in a man who understood his qualifications in other respects so ill; and, indeed, there seems to have been nothing to show for the motive, except the blows; for though Blackmore was, in all probability, what is called a respectable man, there is no evidence of his having possessed

more than the average amount of virtue, or any such particular experience or self-knowledge, as might supply the place of excellence. Some of the wits, too, who advocated a milder form of Christianity than he did, might have doubted the very piety of some of his dogmas, and thus have been induced to treat his arrogation of a right to lecture them with double contempt; and none of them, as critics, were bound to overlook the presumption of a poetaster, who made no scruple to denounce folly and ignorance in others, and to trumpet forth his own claims as a censor and a man of genius. The 'Creation' is a favourable specimen of Blackmore. There is a horrible facility of mediocrity about it. But of his works in general that condemned him, who now shall judge? for who possesses them? Let the reader take a couplet from the lines quoted by Garth in his 'Dispensary.'

> 'Naked and half-burnt hills, with hideous wrack,
> Affright the sky, and *fry the ocean's back.*'

Imagine the following tomes, written by such a pen:

'Creation,' a philosophical poem, in seven books.
'The Redeemer,' a poem, in six books.
'Eliza,' a poem, in ten books.
'Prince Arthur,' an heroic poem, in ten books.
'King Arthur,' an heroic poem, in ten books.
'King Alfred,' a poem, in twelve books.

The plethora which may be pardoned to episcopal virtues.

And to stay his stomach between whiles, besides a number of medical and theological treatises, he versifies the whole body of Psalms, and makes a paraphrase of the 'Book of Job,' by way of extending the lesson on patience. To talk of morality and good intentions, as things that should have saved such 'a long-winded lubber' from the retorts of the wits, was as idle as it would be to talk of the morality of a concert of frogs, or the good intentions of the drone of a Lincolnshire bag-pipe. Blackmore was a man who could not allow for margin, yet nobody made greater demands upon it.

Let us turn to a good old prelate, Hough, Bishop of Winchester, who lived in this square several years, and whom we mention for three reasons: first, because, when elected President of Magdalen College, Oxford, he had resisted, with equal temper and firmness, the arbitrary conduct of James the Second, in forcing a Roman Catholic into his place; second, because he lived to reach his ninety-third year, which we take to be a merit in a bishop, considering the table he is expected to keep, and the plethora which is pardoned to episcopal virtues; and third, because the habitual sweetness of his disposition (and we consider the least proof of such a habit to be no anti-climax in this enumeration) enabled him to give dignity to a pun.

A young clergyman, curate of a neighbouring parish, says his biographer, Mr Wilmot, taking leave

of him one day, and making many awkward bows, ran against, and threw down on the floor, a favourite barometer of the Bishop's. The man was frightened, and extremely concerned; but the good old prelate, with all the complacency possible, said to him, 'Don't be uneasy, Sir. I have observed this glass almost daily for upwards of seventy years, but I never saw it so low before.'

It may seem, on reading this anecdote, that, to render the Bishop's behaviour perfect, the mention of the seventy years might have been spared; but in so excellent a man we must look upon it as a piece of refined delicacy, enhancing the kindly *nonchalance* of the conclusion.

Two other prelates are mentioned as having lived in Kensington Square, and all three are worth recording. The first was Mawson, Bishop of Ely, 'awkward and absent,' and with 'no desire to please,' says an equivocal panegyrist; meaning, in modern parlance, no desire to curry favour; but a man of princely munificence. He was the son of a brewer at Chiswick; founder, we hope, of that orthodox drink the 'fine Chiswick ale.' Mawson did not live so long as Hough, but he attained a very respectable longevity. He died in the year 1770, at the age of eighty-eight. Perhaps the Kensington air was of use to the good bishops.

The other prelate was Herring, Bishop of Bangor, afterwards Primate, and author of some of the best

letters in the 'Elegant Epistles.' He occupied the house at the south-east corner of the Square; but he died at Croydon, in 1757. Herring made a mistake, when he attacked the Beggars' Opera; for which Swift gave him a tremendous rebuke. He had better have attacked the morals of the great world, of which the Opera was a parody. But he probably outlived the misconception; for he was a man of a genial nature, and had a true taste in literature. It is curious, however, to see on which side of the question lay worldly prosperity. Gay, who attacked the morals of the great, and Swift, who defended the attack, missed the preferments they looked for; while Herring, who may have been thought to defend the morals, became Archbishop of Canterbury.

Herring seemed born to be an Archbishop. He was grave yet insinuating, had a sweet voice and a majestic appearance; 'a countenance (as Sydney Smith says) expressive of all the cardinal virtues and the Ten Commandments.' Strange are the vicissitudes of houses. In this same abode of the magnificent-looking prelate, lived, some fifty years afterwards, a man with a

club-foot, who had also been a prelate, but had unfrocked himself to become a statesman, and who, instead of embodying 'all the cardinal virtues and the Ten Commandments,' was thought by most people to have violated every injunction in the Decalogue. This was Talleyrand, a diplomatist under every Government in France, from the beginning of the Revolution to that of Louis Philippe inclusive, with the exception of the Reign of Terror. We believe him, nevertheless, to have been a very calumniated person. That he had led the ordinary life of a young French noble, under the old *régime*, is very likely; and that he had no taste for being a martyr, is equally so. It is easy also to palm upon a wit and a man of the world every clever saying that seems to tell against political honesty. But, for the most part, Talleyrand did good to the world under his different masters; hindered them from being worse; and was for promoting constitutional government. He lost Napoleon's favour by his tendencies that way, and by his protest against the iniquitous seizure of Spain. The Emperor's decline dates from the period of his differences with Talleyrand. While yet a bishop, Talleyrand advocated the rights of the working clergy; and he appears to have been a man of amiable private intercourse. Let justice be done to the club-foot that made the best, instead of the worst of things; not always the way with injured

members of society. Perhaps it will not be thought an anti-climax in this commercial country—indeed it is a good ground of eulogium anywhere—if we finish this tribute to his memory, by quoting what is said of him during his residence in this Square, by the Kensington historian; to wit, that 'his character was marked by urbanity of manners, and by strict punctuality in his payments.'

Old Red Lion Inn
in the High Street

CHAPTER EIGHT

RETURNING out of Kensington Square by the way we entered it, we come, in the most open part of the High Street, to the parish church and churchyard; the former, a small and homely building for so distinguished a suburb; the latter suggesting a doubt, whether a burial-ground ought to abut so closely on a public way.

In some moods of the mind, the juxtaposition is very painful. It looks as if death itself were no

escape from the turmoils of life. We feel as if the noise of carts and cries were never to be out of one's hearing; as if the tears, however hidden, of those who stood mournfully looking at our graves, were to be mocked by the passing crowd of indifferent spectators; as if the dead might be sensible of the very market going on, with all its night-lights and bustle (as it does here on Saturdays), and of the noise of drunken husbands and wives, persisting in bringing a sense of misery into one's last home.

On the other hand, the sociable man may sometimes be disposed to regard with complacency this kind of posthumous intercourse with the living. He may feel as if the dead were hardly the departed—as if they were still abiding among their friends and fellow-creatures, not displeased even to hear the noise and the bustle; or, at least, as if in ceasing to hear our voices they were still, so to speak, reposing in our arms. Morning, somehow, in this view of the case, would seem to be still theirs, though they choose to lie in bed; cheerful noon is with them, without their having any of the trouble of it. The names may be read on their tombstones as familiarly as they used to be on their doors; children play about their graves, unthinkingly indeed, but joyously, and with as little thought of irreverence as butterflies; and the good fellow going home at night from his party, breathes a jovial, instead of a mournful, blessing on their memories. Perhaps he knew them.

Perhaps he has been joining in one of their old favourite glees by Callcott or Spofforth, the former of whom was a Kensington man, and the latter of whom lies buried here, and is recorded at the church door. And assuredly the dead Spofforth would find no fault with his living remembrancer.

In quiet country places there is, in fact, a sort of compromise in this instance between the two feelings of privacy and publicity, which we have often thought very pleasing. The dead in a small, sequestered village, seem hardly removed from their own houses. The last home seems almost a portion of the first. The clergyman's house often has the churchyard as close to it as the garden; and when he goes into his grave, he seems but removed into another room; gone to bed, and to his sleep. He has not 'left.' He lies there with his family, still ready to waken with them all, on the heavenly morning.

This, however, is a feeling upon the matter, which we find it difficult to realise in a bustling town. We are there convinced upon the whole, that, whether near to houses or away from them, the sense of quiet is requisite to the proper idea of the churchyard. The dead being actually severed from us, no longer having voices, all sights and sounds, but of the gentlest and quietest kind, seem to be impertinences towards them; not to belong to them. Quiet, being the thing farthest removed from cities, and what we imagine to pervade all space, and the

gulfs between the stars, is requisite to make us feel that we are standing on the threshold of heaven.

Upon the whole, therefore, we cannot approve of churchyards in living thoroughfares, and thus must needs object to the one in the place before us; though there are portions of it to the north and west of the church more sequestered (for a small remove in these cases makes a great difference); and in those portions the most noticeable of the graves are situate. They are not many; nor have we much to say of persons lying in the church itself, or in the church vaults. What notices we have to give, whether in church or churchyard, we shall put in chronological order, as not only being most convenient, but having a certain mortal propriety.

But first we must return to the church itself. From what we have said of it, the reader will conclude that it is remarkable, as an edifice, for nothing but the smallness and homeliness of its appearance; but it has this curious additional claim to consideration; namely, that what with partial rebuildings, and wholesale repairs, it has been altered, since the year 1683, nearly a dozen times. How often before then, we cannot say; nor do we know when it was first built. But the alterations, for the most part, appear to have been as bad as what they altered. They beat the silk stocking, the repeated mendings of which turned it into

worsted. They were always worsted, badly darned. They resembled the scapegrace relation of the famous Penn, whom his punning recorder described as a pen that had been 'often cut, but never mended.' What were improvements or requirements in some respects, became defacements in others, or things to be wished away. The painted window was meagre; the galleries clogged up a space already too little, and looked as if they would slide into the pews; the pews themselves were too tall, and aggravated that sense of closeness and crowding, to which the increasing population naturally tended, and which is still the first thing that strikes a visitor of the church.

While writing this passage, however (for the church is now undergoing another repair), we have the pleasure of observing that the pews are in the act of being made lower; and we hail this undoubted improvement, as an evidence of the better taste which new authorities have brought even into Kensington parish church, and which, indeed, was to be expected, from what they have done in other respects. We must add, that its psalmody appears to have been for some time past superior to that of most churches, owing, it would seem, to the accomplished family of the Callcotts, who have long been residents of the parish, and one of whom, no great while ago, was organist. Nor should the writer omit, that the parish authorities, both

Interior of Kensington Old Church

clerical and laical, and their servants also, do justice to the example at their head, and are as courteous as becomes their position.

Here, in church or churchyard, among other less noticeable persons, have been buried—

Imprimis, in the year 1510, Philip Meautis, son and heir of John Meautis; which said John Meautis, described in a pardon granted by Edward the Fifth, as 'John Meautis of our town of Calais, clerk, otherwise called John de Meautis, lately of London, gentleman, otherwise called John de Meautis, lately of Kensington, in the county of Middlesex, gentleman, otherwise called John de Meutice, of the town of Westminster, in the county of Middlesex, yeoman, or under whatever name he may be registered,' is forgiven and absolved from all outlawry and all other consequences of neglects, contempts, concealments, conspiracies, extortions, murders (*murdra!*), and whatsoever other felonies and enormities he may have been guilty of. Probably it was a pardon from Richard, the poor little king's uncle, on the understanding that an enemy of the House of York was to become a friend; an expectation which did not hinder John Meautis, or his son Philip (we know not which) from becoming secretary to Kings Henry the Seventh and Eighth. We notice the name for two other reasons; first, because it was that of Bacon's faithful secretary, Sir Thomas Meautis, who raised the characteristic statue to the

philosopher, which sits thinking on his monument at St Albans; second, to observe, that the alias *Meautis*, or *Meutice* (the name being obviously of French origin), renders it probable that there is more propriety in the vulgar pronunciation of *Bewfort* for *Beaufort*, than might otherwise be supposed, especially as we retain it in the word *beauty*, the English of *beauté*. There is reason to believe that it was the real old French pronunciation. We have read in some book, but forget where, that the existing mode of speaking French, which has so frittered and clipped it, and rendered its prosody such a puzzle to English readers, is not older than the time of Louis the Fourteenth.

The next distinguished burial we meet with, is that of one Sir *Manhood* Penruddock, a gentleman whose peremptory baptismal name, joined to his chivalrous rank, and to the nature of his death, appears to insist on attention to his memory, upon pain of a challenge from his ghost. He was 'slain at Notting Wood (saith the parish register) in fight'; that is to say, we take it, in a duel; for the 'fight' was in the year 1608, during the pacific times of King James the First. Sir Manhood was most likely some hot-headed Welshman, the son of a corresponding father, who had thus christened him, by way of injunction to uphold the fame of his ancestors.

From Sir Manhood, we are borne over a considerable interval of time, and brought to Addison's

Earl of Warwick, who died in the year 1721, at the age of four-and-twenty. He was son of the Countess whom Addison married, and was the youth to whom the moralist is said to have addressed the famous words, 'See how a Christian can die.' A statue of him, in marble, and in good condition, is still remaining in the church, on the right-hand side of the principal entrance from the street. It sits under an epitaph, leaning on an urn; and has an aspect, which, at first sight, you hardly know whether to be male or female. This is owing, partly to the delicate smooth face and flowing hair, and partly to the robe, which has something of the look of a lady's gown. On turning to the legs, and finding them in ancient sandals, you discover that the gown is a Roman toga. Either the face is unlike, or the compliment to its manliness (strangely paid in the first person—*virile nescio quid*) is clearly undeserved. The whole epitaph, indeed, is contradictory to the tradition handed down respecting the rakery of this young nobleman; probably on no better foundation than Addison's dying words, which have been supposed to imply some special moral necessity for them, on the part of his hearer. Writers complimented the Earl on his virtues, while he was living; and Addison, in some pleasant letters to him, on the subject of birds, speaks of his 'more severe studies,' and of their common friend, Virgil. The proba-

bility is, that he was of a delicate constitution, and of a lively enough mind, and that his attention had been drawn to the writings of Shaftesbury and others, with a vivacity which Addison thought fit to repress.

Francis Colman, in 1733. Father and grandfather of the two George Colmans, the dramatists, both buried here also. He was sometime British Minister at the Court of Tuscany. The dramatic propensity of the family appears to have commenced with this gentleman, who interested himself in operatic affairs, and wrote the words of Handel's 'Ariadne in Naxos.' He was an intimate friend of Gay.

Dr John Jortin, in the year 1770, aged seventy-one. Author of the 'Life of Erasmus'; an elegant scholar, critic, and theologian. He lies in the churchyard, under a flat stone, which is surrounded with iron rails, and briefly inscribed with his name, age, and the day on which he 'ceased to be mortal' (*mortalis esse desiit*). Among the improvements which the authorities here are making, we trust we shall see these good words rescued from the dirt which has obscured them.

There were some curious inconsistencies in Jortin. He was a good-natured man, with unattractive manners; was a writer of elegant sermons, which he read very badly; and was always intimating that he ought to have had greater preferment in the church; though he was suspected, not unreason-

ably, of differing with it on some points held essential to orthodoxy. His Life was written by Dr Disney the Unitarian. The Doctor's book ought to have been more amusing, considering that Jortin had the reputation of being a wit. To the best of our recollection, it contains but one solitary jest, and that more pleasant than exquisite. Jortin, when summoned to make his appearance in some public room, before the bishop who gave him his vicarage, could not find his hat. On returning to his friends, he said, 'I have lost my hat, but got a living.'

Mr Thomas Wright, 1776. One of those didactic gentlemen, who cannot leave off the habit of fault-finding, even in their graves, but must needs lecture and *snub* the readers of their tombstones. This posthumous busybody, who informs us that his own head is quiet, seems determined that the case shall be different with ours. The following is his epitaph in the churchyard :—

> 'Farewell, vain world! I've had enough of thee;
> I value not what thou canst say of me;
> Thy smiles I value not, nor frowns don't fear;
> All's one to me, my head is quiet here.
> What faults you've seen in me, take care to shun;
> Go home, and see there's something to be done.'

—Of course there is. But why could not Mr Thomas Wright let us have a little quiet, as well as himself? Did he despair of being able to give us any pleasure in his company, alive or dead?

CHAPTER NINE

THE Reverend Martin Madan, 1790, aged sixty-four. His mother was a Cowper, and aunt of the poet. He made himself conspicuous in his day, and very unpopular with the religious world, by writing a book called 'Thelypthora' (Female Ruin), in which, upon the strength of the Mosaic law, he recommended polygamy as a remedy for seduction. His arguments were learned and acute, but accompanied by so much bigotry, that in conjunction with the usual repugnance of the community to touch upon one of the sorest of social questions, they left him at the mercy of opponents who might otherwise have found them very puzzling. The reader may judge the matter for himself from the following anecdote, which Madan relates in his book.

'On conversing,' he says, 'with a gentleman who is a Jew on this subject, he told me, that some time ago a rich young Jew at Amsterdam seduced a poor Jewess who was a servant-girl. She insisted on his publicly marrying her, which he refused. She complained to the synagogue, who summoned him to

appear before them, that they might inquire properly into the fact. Finding it true, they sentenced him to marry her publicly. He would not, urging the difference of his rank from hers; but this plea was not allowed; they urged the law of God against him; but he continuing obstinate in his refusal, they excommunicated him. He applied to some of the states of Holland, that they would interfere; but they refused it, saying the synagogue had a right to enforce their own laws. I asked the gentleman with whom I was conversing, what would have been the case, if this young man had been before married to another woman then living. He answered, "just the same; for, by the law of Moses, no man can take a virgin, and afterwards abandon her at his pleasure."' *

The reader will see the difficulties of the question, and this is not the place for discussing it; though it is impossible for a mind of any reflection not to be crossed with a deep shade of regret at seeing how constantly the far greater questions which involve it, and which Mr Madan was incompetent even to discuss, are evaded and put off by moral and statistical writers who are otherwise conscientious men.

George Colman, the Elder, 1794, aged sixty-one, author of the 'Jealous Wife' and other comedies; joint author with Garrick, of the 'Clandestine

* Vol. ii. p. 336.

GEORGE COLMAN THE ELDER

Marriage'; with Bonnell Thornton, of the periodical work, 'The Connoisseur'; and translator of Terence's Plays, and Horace's Art of Poetry. An elegant scholar, and lively and amusing, but in no respects a great writer. He comes much nearer to Murphy, than to Vanbrugh and Farquhar. He saw pleasantly into the surface of things, but little further.

Dr Warren, in 1797, aged sixty-six. The elder of two celebrated physicians of that name, father and son. Dr Warren seems to have been a model of his class. He was no formalist, but impressed and interested his patients with the most sterling qualities, both professional and personal, and had the art (a very great and important art in a physician) of entertaining them, and keeping up their spirits. We have heard it said, on the best of all authorities on such a point—that of an amiable and intelligent woman — that the 'finest eyes in the world' were hereditary in the Warrens; so that, under all the circumstances, the reader will not wonder to be told, that Mrs Inchbald, who was one of his patients, was secretly in love with him, and would pace Sackville Street after dark, purely to have the pleasure of seeing the light in his window. A pleasant answer is recorded of him to Lady Spencer. Her Ladyship questioned whether the minds of physicians must not be frequently embittered by the reflection, that a different mode of treatment might have saved the lives of their

patients. Dr Warren thought otherwise. 'The balance between satisfaction and remorse must,' he considered, 'be greatly in favour of satisfaction,' and, as an instance of it, he hoped he should have the pleasure of curing her Ladyship 'forty times before he killed her.'

James Elphinstone, in 1804, aged eighty-eight; the good Dominie before mentioned; translator of 'Martial.' The marble tablet inscribed to his memory, on the outside of the eastern wall, was set up by his wife; which reminds us of an omission in our notice of him; to wit, that, after his return from a visit to France, when a young man, he never altered his dress. It was a suit of drab colour, with bag-wig and toupee, all made according to the fashion which prevailed at that time. Latterly, however, he more than once offered to make any change in it 'which Mrs Elphinstone might deem proper'; but the good lady's eyes had been so accustomed to see her husband as he was, that she could not bear the thought of beholding him otherwise; or, to use the more emphatic language of one of his pupils (the late Mr Dallas, the novelist), his virtues and worth had so 'sanctified his appearance in her eyes, that she would have thought the alteration a sacrilege.' It appears, also, from accounts given us by the same gentleman, that the worthy schoolmaster, to his zeal for the purity of the English language, added no less for that of the

appearance of the ladies. For Mr Dallas tells us, that, when any 'were in company whose sleeves were at a distance from their elbows, or whose bosoms were at all exposed, he would fidget from place to place, look askance with a slight convulsion of his left eye, and never rest till he approached some of them, and pointing to their arms, would say, "Oh! yes, indeed, it is very pretty; but it betrays more fashion than modesty," or some such familiar phrase; after which he became very good-humoured.' One fancies good Mrs Elphinstone bridling up, at these times, in the consciousness of her own well-covered charms; and approving her husband, for thus combining his admiration of ladies' beauties in the abstract, with objections to the fair challengers of it in particular.

But we shall forget the place of which we are talking; though, indeed, to speak of such deceased people as the Elphinstones, is the next thing to looking at children playing over their graves. Their smiles excuse one's own.

The ensuing record on a stone in the churchyard recalls all our gravity:

Caroline Nelson Bianchi,
Died June 28, 1807, aged 5.

Also,
Francesco Bianchi,
Di Çremona, died 27th Nov., 1810, aged 59.

engraving Old Church

We mention both these names, for the affecting reason, that they record a father who died broken-hearted for the loss of his child. He was a distinguished musical composer, and wrote operas that were favourites with the Bantis and Billingtons of his day. It hardly need be added that he was a most amiable and benevolent man. What a death he must have died! Three years of wasting sorrow! Yet death thus loses its sting; and in the last moments there is the blissful hope of rejoining the object of affection. Those are great payments of their kind; great privileges; unable as the sufferer must be, till sure of dying, to rejoice in their possession.

Elizabeth Inchbald, before mentioned, 1821. She lies at the western extremity of the churchyard, close to a son of Canning, the verses on whose tombstone by his father have little merit beyond that of conventional elegance. They are not unaffecting; for if nature speaks at all, she must speak to some purpose, whatever be her language; but, compared with it in other respects, the plain prose tribute to Mrs Inchbald is characteristic of the prevailing difference in the minds of the two parties—that to the woman being truth itself, while the statesman's is truth after a fashion; and the fashion addresses itself to one's attention as much as the truth.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
ELIZABETH INCHBALD,
WHOSE WRITINGS WILL BE CHERISHED,
WHILE TRUTH, SIMPLICITY, AND FEELING
COMMAND PUBLIC ADMIRATION;
AND WHOSE RETIRED AND EXEMPLARY LIFE
CLOSED AS IT EXISTED,
IN ACTS OF CHARITY AND BENOVELENCE.

'Existed' is hardly the right word. It should have been 'was passed,' or something of that kind. But it is intelligible, and was true. We take the opportunity of observing, in addition to our previous notice of this lady, that although we have spoken but of the latest and profoundest of her two novels, the 'Simple Story,' the other, 'Nature and Art,' is also full of genius, and would alone have rendered the steps of her pilgrimage in this life worthy the tracing. It is one of the earliest works of fiction in this country, that sounded in the ears of the prosperous the great modern note of Justice to All. No reader, of the least reflection, can forget the impression made on him by the trial of the poor girl, whose crime was owing to the very judge on the bench that sentences her to death.

Reginald Spofforth, the glee-composer, in 1827, aged thirty-seven. There is a tablet to his memory on the left-hand side on the outer wall of the church, close by the principal entrance. Bacon has compared the fragrance of flowers out-of-doors to the coming and

going of the warbling of music. The *crescendos* and *diminuendos* in Spofforth's beautiful composition, 'Health to my dear,' always remind us of that charming simile. Musicians, for the most part, are not as long-lived ás painters, or even as poets, though the latter are so excitable a race. The reason is not, perhaps, so much that the musical art is of the more sensuous nature, as that musicians, owing to the demands of their profession, continue all their lives to go more into company, and to keep late hours. The painter (barring corporate jealousies) can live as quiet as a hermit; and the poet, from the habit of seeing so much in everything that he looks upon, makes a refuge for himself against vicissitude out of his books and his fireside.

James Mill, in June 1836, aged sixty-two; the historian of British India;—distinguished father of an illustrious son. He has a tablet on one of the pillars in the church. Mr Mill persuaded himself, that a man who had never been in India, and who knew none of its languages, was better qualified to write a history of that country, than one who had. The consequence of this paradox was, that after his death, the bookseller found it necessary to employ one of the persons thus described as less competent, for the purpose of correcting the mistakes of his predecessor. Nevertheless, Mr Mill's history was a work so remarkable for its ability, that although he had found great fault with the East India Company,

they, much to the credit of their feelings, or their policy, appointed him to a considerable office in their establishment. Would to Heaven they had empowered him to give the unfortunate millions under their government fewer reasons to curse their officers in general, and a little more salt to their rice.

George Colman, the younger, in October 1836, aged seventy-four; a more amusing, though not so judicious a dramatist as his father. His excellence lay in farce. His greatest defect was in sentiment; for which he substituted noise or commonplace. In the decline of life, he attained to a very unlucky piece of prosperity. He was appointed Dramatic Censor; that is to say, reviser, under Government, of plays offered to managers for performance; and in the exercise of this office, with a ludicrous and unblushing severity, he struck out of the pieces submitted to him the least oath or adjuration, with which his own plays had been plentifully garnished.

Alfred Hammond Charnley, 1837, aged three years and eight months; and Thomas Foxcroft Charnley, 1851, aged twenty-one years. We know not who the Charnleys were; but we notice them, because their grave, the only one in the churchyard so distinguished, is adorned with flowers. A printed tablet requests people not to pluck the flowers, and the request appears to be attended to. Humankind are disposed to be reasonable and feeling, if reason-

able appeal is made to them, and a chord in the heart is touched. The public cemeteries, which we have imitated from the French, appear to have brought back among us this inclination to put flowers on graves. The custom has prevailed more or less in almost all parts of the world, according as nations and religions have been kindly. It is the Puritans who would seem to have done it away in England and Scotland. Wales, we believe, is the only part of the island in which it has never been been discontinued. The custom is surely good and desirable. It does not follow that those who are slow to resume it must be unfeeling, any more than that those who are quick to do so must of necessity be otherwise. A variety of thoughts on the subject of death itself may produce different impressions in this respect on different minds; but, generally speaking, evidence is in favour of the flowers. You are sure that those who put them, think of the dead somehow. Whatever motives may be mixed up with it, the respectful attention solicited towards the departed is unequivocal; and this circumstance is pleasing to the living, and may benefit their dispositions. They think that their own memories may probably be cherished in like manner; and thoughtfulness is awakened in them, towards living as well as dead. It is a peculiar privilege, too, of flowers, to befit every place in which they appear, and to contribute to it its best associations. We had almost

said, they are incapable of being put to unworthy use. The contradiction would look simply monstrous, and the flowers be pitied for the insult. No butcher would think of putting them in a slaughter-house; unless, indeed, they could overpower its odour. No inquisitor (we beg the butcher's pardon for naming two such persons together) was ever cruel or impudent enough to wreathe flowers about a rack. Flowers, besides being beautiful themselves, are suggestive of every other kind of beauty; of gentleness, of youthfulness, of hope. They are evidences of Nature's good-nature; proofs manifest that she means us well, and more than well; that she loves to give us the beautiful in addition to the useful. They neutralise bad with good; beautify good itself; make life livelier; human bloom more blooming; and anticipate the spring of Heaven over the winter of the grave. Their very frailty, and the shortness of their lives, please us, because of this their indestructible association with beauty; for while they make us regret our own like transitory existence, they soothe us with a consciousness, however dim, of our power to perceive beauty; therefore of our link with something divine and deathless, and of our right to hope that immortal thoughts will have immortal realisation. And it is for all these reasons the flowers on graves are beautiful, and that we hope to see them prosper accordingly.

But we have two more reasons for noticing the

"Those are my dear children."

particular grave before us. One is, that when we saw it for the first time, a dog came nestling against it, as if with affection; taking up his bed (in which we left him), as though he had again settled himself beside a master. The other, that while again looking at the grave, and thinking how becomingly the flowers were attended to, being as fresh as when we saw them before, a voice behind us said gently: 'Those are my dear children.' It was the mother. She had seen us, perhaps, looking longer than was customary, and thus been induced to speak. We violate no delicacy in mentioning the circumstance. Records on tombstones are introducers of the living to the dead; makers of mortal acquaintances; and 'one touch of nature,' in making the 'whole world kin,' gives them the right of speaking like kindred, to, and of, one another. We expressed to the good parent our pleasure at seeing the flowers so well kept, and for so long a time. She said they would be so as long as she lived.

It is impossible not to respect and sympathise with feelings like these. We should say, nevertheless (and as questions of this kind are of general interest, we address the remark to all loving survivors), that although a life-long observance of such attentions could do anything but dishonour to living or dead, the discontinuance of it, after a certain lapse of time, could not, of necessity, be a reproach to either; for the practice concerns the

feelings of the one still more than the memory of the other; and in cases where it might keep open the wounds of remembrance too long and too sorely, no loving persons, while alive, could wish that their survivors should take such pains to hinder themselves from being relieved. It is natural for some time, often for too long a time, to associate with the idea of the departed, the bodies in which they lived, and in which we loved them. Few of us can so spiritualise their new condition all at once, as to visit them in thought nowhere but in another world. We have been too much accustomed to them bodily, in this. In fact, they are still bodily with us; still in our world, if not on it; and for a time we must reconcile that thought to ourselves as well as we can; warm it with our tears; put it on an equality with us, by means of our very sorrow, from which, whatsoever its other disadvantages, it is now exempt; give it earthly privileges of some kind, whether of flowers, or other fondness.

Nothing but urn-burial could help us better; could shorten the sense of the interval between one world and the other; between the corporeal and the spiritual condition; and to the practice of urn-burial the nations must surely return. Population will render it unavoidable. But in the meantime, we must gradually let our thoughts of the body decay, even as the body itself decays; must consent to part with it, and become wholly spiritual,

wholly sensible that its best affections were things of the mind and heart; and that as those, while in this world, could triumph over thoughts of death, so they are now ascertaining why they were enabled to do so, in another.

Let flowers, therefore, be put awhile on graves, and contend with the idea of death. Let them contend with it, if we please, as long as we live, provided our own lives cannot in the nature of things be long; in which case, we are, in a manner, making our own mortal bed with those of the departed, and preparing to sleep sweetly together till the great morning. But under other circumstances, let us learn to be content that the flowers die, and that our companions have gone away; for go we shall ourselves; and it is fit that we believe them gone into the only state in which they cannot perish.

Figure from Old Charity School.

CHAPTER TEN

RETURNING from the church into the High Street, there presents itself, not many yards further, on the right side of the way, a curious-looking brick edifice, at once slender and robust (if the reader can imagine such a combination); or, tall and sturdy; or, narrow, compact, and thick in the walls. Over the second storey is a square tower, probably intended to hold a bell; and originally there was another tower above that, which must have made the whole edifice appear unaccountably tall. Finally, to adopt the convenient word of 'that late eminent antiquary, Mr John Carter,' there stands on each side of the first storey, the 'costumic statue of a charity-child.'

It is the old Kensington Charity School, built by Sir John Vanbrugh; now a savings' bank, with a new schoolroom by the side of it.

Sir John, as is well known, was a wit full of mirth in his comedies, and an architect full of gravity in his buildings. He was the son of a Dutchman by a French mother. A certain Dr Evans, who was addicted to the like extremes in literature, though

The Old Charity School in 1840.

neither his mirth nor his gravity was so good, wrote a jesting epitaph on Sir John, the final couplet of which has become famous:

> 'Lie heavy on him, earth, for he
> Laid many a heavy load on thee.'

Sir Joshua Reynolds, however, was of opinion that Vanbrugh's style was misconstrued, and that it was very poetical and noble. The present building has certainly contrived to look heavy, even though it is narrow; but nobody who looks at it can doubt that it was built to endure. If suffered to remain, it will, even now, probably outlast the whole of Kensington. Look at it, reader, as you go, with an eye to this supposition. Think, also, what interest a celebrated man can attach to a homely structure; and wonder to reflect, that he who built it was the same 'Captain Vanbrugh,' a man of 'wit and pleasure about town,' who wrote the characters of romping Miss Hoyden and the dandy Lord Foppington.

Figure from Old Court School

Next to Sir John Vanbrugh's old edifice is the new Vestry Hall, a building lately erected in the style that prevailed in the reign of James the First, and which has acquired a natural popularity in this suburb from the presence of Holland House. There is something in the style, too, very suit-

able to the British climate, its bay-windows largely admitting the light, while the comparatively blind and solid walls are characteristic of warmth and comfort. The warm colours, also, of yellow and red, that prevail in the exterior of these buildings, and the bricks of which they are composed, in preference to stone and stucco, are far better for us than the cold whites of the latter. Honest old red is the best of all. The miserablest object in England on a rainy day (next to the pauper that inhabits it) is a tumble-down hut of lath and plaster.

Nearly opposite the new Vestry Hall, in the house now occupied by Mr Wright, an ironmonger, lived for some years the once celebrated political writer, William Cobbett.

Cobbett, as some of our readers may remember, was a self-taught man of great natural abilities, who, from excess of self-esteem, defect of sympathy out of the pale of his own sphere, and a want of that scholarly 'discipline of humanity,' of which such men stand particularly in need, went from one extreme in politics to another with anything but misgiving; injured the good which he otherwise did to Reform, by a long course of obloquy and exaggeration; brought his courage and even his principles into question, by retreats before his opponents, and apparent compromises with Government; and ended a life of indomitable industry, by obtaining the reputation rather of a powerful and amusing, than

estimable or lasting writer. Readers of his 'Political Register' will not easily forget how he lorded it over public men, as if they knew nothing, and he knew everything; or what letters he addressed to them, in a style beyond the unceremonious; such as those to the Bishop of London, beginning 'Bishop,' and to Sir Robert Peel, whom he addressed as 'Peel's-Bill-Peel,' and saluted simply by his surname.

Hazlitt said of him, that had everything been done as he desired in Church and State, he would have differed with it all next day, out of the pure pleasure of opposition.

Cobbett's worse propensity was to exult over the fallen. His implied curses of the hapless George the Third, who had nothing to do with the fine and imprisonment which produced them, are too shocking to be repeated. He crowed unmercifully over the suicide of Lord Castlereagh; and, ridiculously as ungenerously, pronounced Walter Scott, during his decline, and after the bankruptcy which he laboured so heroically to avert, to have been nothing but a 'humbug.'

But the vigour which he thus abused was not to be denied. Bating an occasional parade of the little scholarship which he had acquired, and which sometimes betrayed him into incorrectness, even of the grammar which he professed to teach, nothing could surpass the pure vigorous, idiomatical style of his general writing, or the graphical descriptions he would

give both of men and things, whether in artificial life or in matters connected with his agricultural experience. A volume of select passages from his writings, chiefly of this kind, might be of permanent service to his name; which, otherwise, will be stifled under the load of rubbish with which he mixed it.

At the back of his house at Kensington, in ground now devoted to other purposes, and also at a farm, which he possessed at the same time, not far off (at Barn-Elm), Cobbett cultivated his Indian corn, his American Forest Trees, his pigs, poultry, and butchers' meat, all which he pronounced to be the best that were ever beheld; but the aristocratic suburb did not prove a congenial soil, and he quitted it, a bankrupt. He appears, nevertheless, to have succeeded, upon the whole, in a worldly point of view, and ultimately made his way into Parliament; a triumph, however, which was probably the death of him, owing to the late hours and bad air for which he exchanged his farming habits of life. At all events, he did not survive it long. Like many men who make a great noise in public, he seems to have been a good, quiet sort of man in private; occasionally blustering a little, perhaps, at his workmen, and more dictatorial to them than he would have liked others to be to himself; but a good husband and father, a pleasant companion; and his family seem to have heartily lamented him when he died; the best of all testimonies to private worth. His appear-

ance (to judge by his portraits, for we never saw him) was characteristic of the man, except as regarded vanity. He dressed plainly and unaffectedly; was strong and well-built; and had a large forehead, and roundish and somewhat small features, for the size of his cheeks, a disparity betokening greater will than self-control.

Cobbett said little of Kensington, considering the time he lived there. It was not to be expected, indeed, that he could be fond of a place that had a palace at one end of it, the mansion of a Whig lord at the other, and in which he did not find himself either welcome or prosperous. What he does say, chiefly concerns his corn and his trees. There are but one or two passages characteristic of the locality, and those are more so of himself, and not unamusing. In one of them he speaks of the poor Irish, who stand at the corners of the streets, 'their rags dancing with the wind'; but he does it rather to rebuke than to pity them. He could not get them to work for victuals instead of money; not taking into consideration, that the poor, rack-rented creatures could not pay their landlord without it. A correspondent proposed to pay Cobbett himself in victuals for his Weekly Register, two pounds of mutton per quarter; but the rebuker of the Irish is very angry at this; and assuming, with a somewhat Irish and self-refuting logic, that a man who did not approve of payments in meat, must be addicted

to slops, and have a dirty complexion, calls him a 'tea-kettle reptile,' and a 'squalid wretch.'

The other passage gives us his opinion of the reviews in Hyde Park, and their consumption of gunpowder. His compliments to American economy in the use of that material, are hardly flattering to a great nation; but everything was excessive in the praise and blame which he bestowed, and, consequently, was in the habit of undoing itself.

Speaking of the Duke of Clarence's appointment to the office of Lord High Admiral, he says, that when he first heard of it, he was 'very much pleased, because he thought it would tend to break up the Scotch phalanx, which appeared to him to be taking the whole navy by storm.' He adds:

'The manner of executing the office was a thing which I had little time to attend to; but I must confess, that I soon became tired of the apparent incessant visiting of the seaports, and the firing of salutes. I see the Americans getting forward with a navy, fit to meet us in war, without more noise than is made by half-a-dozen mice, when they get into my pantry or cupboard. These Yankees have an education wonderfully well calculated to make them economical in the affairs of war. I never saw one of them in my life, man or boy, shoot at any living thing without killing it. A Yankee never discharges his gun at anything, until he has made a calculation of the value of the thing; and if that

value does not exceed the value of the powder and the shot, the gun remains with the charge in it, until something presents itself of value surpassing that of the charge. In shooting at partridges, quails, squirrels, and other things of the land kind, they always count the number of shot they put into the gun, and will put in no more than they think the carcass of the animal will pay for, leaving a certain clear profit, after the cost of labour. These are most excellent principles to be imbibed by those who are destined to conduct the affairs of war; and when I, being in a seaport, hear bang, bang, bang, on one side of me, answered by other bangs on the other side, and find no soul that can tell me what the noise is for; or when I, being at Kensington, hear, coming from Hyde Park, pop, pop, pop—pop, pop—pop, pop, pop, pop, the cause of which I remember but too well; when I hear these sounds, I cannot help lamenting, that our commanders, by sea and land, did not receive their education among the Yankees, who have raised a fleet, the existence of which we shall one day have to rue; and I should not be afraid to bet all I have in the world, that they have done it without wasting one single pound of powder.'*

Fancy our young Nelsons and Jervises going to America to learn how to shoot; and their unerring teachers, man or boy, holding their hands before they

* Political Register, vol. lxvi. p. 267.

begin, till they counted the relative values of the charge and the cock-sparrow.

Never, we verily believe, was gunpowder expended at less cost, or to better purpose, than in our reviews and royal salutes; for the sounds reach the ears of despots. Nobler spectacles of warlike power were never beheld, that those which were presented to the world the other day under the presidency of a sovereign, who being a wife and mother, must needs represent peace itself, and hatred of wars; but being a queen also, must also represent the power, which warns, and is prepared to punish, the infractors of peace. Most desirable is peace; most horrible and detestable is war; and no magnanimity will have been wanting to endure its idiotical babble, and endeavour to stay its arm. But if the blow must be struck, it must. And we hope and believe, that if ever the existence of American power is to be rued by the Old World, it will be not in antagonism with England, but side by side with it, and to the final confusion of all who hate the crowned freedom of the one, still more, perhaps, than the republicanism of its brother; for England disproves their identification of monarchical government with despotic will.

Cobbett's premises at the back neighboured those of a small mansion, Scarsdale House, which he must have considered an eyesore, for it belonged to a noble family, and was then a boarding-school; a

thing which he hated, for its inducing tradesmen's and farmers' daughters to play on the pianoforte. He saw the dangers attending the elevation of ranks in society, but none of its advantages, except in

regard to eating and drinking, and those he would have confined to his own beef and bacon. A little onward from Mr Wright's door, is Wright's Lane, which turns out of High Street, and, containing Scarsdale House and Scarsdale Terrace, leads round

by a pleasant, sequestered corner into the fields, and terminates this point of Kensington with the New Workhouse. Scarsdale House, now no longer a boarding-school, appears to have returned into the occupation of the family who are understood to have built it; for its present inmate is the Hon. E. Curzon, one of the gentlemen who contributed to the collection of cabinet-work at Gore House. From an intimation, however, in Faulkner, it would seem as if it had been called Scarsdale House before the creation of the title in the Curzon and Howe-Curzon families; in which case, it was probably built by the Earl of Scarsdale, whose family name was Leake, the Scarsdale celebrated by Pope and Rowe for his love of the bottle and of Mrs Bracegirdle.

> 'Each mortal has his pleasure;—none deny
> Scarsdale his bottle, Darty his ham-pie.'

Darty was Dartineuf, or Dartiquenave (a famous epicure).

> 'Do not most fragrant Earl disclaim
> Thy bright, thy reputable flame
> To Bracegirdle the brown;
> But publicly espouse the dame,
> And say, G— d— the town.'

Earl Leake, by other accounts besides these, does not appear to have been a person whom 'Bracegirdle the brown,' the charmer of the age, would have thought it any very desirable honour to marry.

We hope, therefore, that the more respectable Scarsdales, the Curzons, were always possessors of the house, and that, in displacing the boarding-school, they illustrate, as in greater instances, the injunction of their curious motto, 'Let Curzon hold what Curzon held.'

The corner, above-mentioned, of Wright's Lane, contains a batch of good old family houses, one of which belonged to Sir Isaac Newton, though it is not known that he ever lived in it. A house in which he did live we shall come to by-and-by.

The Workhouse to which you arrive in turning by this corner, is a large, handsome, brick building, in the old style before-mentioned, possessed of a garden with seats in it, and looking (upon the old principle of association in such matters) more like a building for a lord than for a set of paupers. Paupers, however, by the help of Christianity, have been discovered, by the wiser portion of their fellow-creatures, to be persons whom it is better to treat kindly than contemptuously; and hence, as new workhouses arise, something is done to rescue the pauper-mind from its worst, most hopeless, and most exasperating sense of degradation, and to let it participate in some of the good consequences of industry and refinement.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

RETURNING into the road, we here quit the High Street, and have the Terrace on our left hand, and Lower Phillimore Place on the other side of the way.

Terrace, in this, as in so many other instances in the suburbs, is a ridiculous word; for the ground is as flat as any around it, and terrace (a mound of earth) implies height and dignity.

> 'May thy lofty head be crown'd,
> With many a tower and terrace.'
>
> MILTON.

The modern passion for the fine names and foreign words 'hath a perferment in it.' It is one of the consequences of the general rise in society. But people would do well to learn the meanings of the words before they employ them; not to christen young ladies Blanche, who are swarthy; cry 'bravo' (brave *he!*) to female singers, instead of 'brava'; nor give the appellation of heights to rows of houses that are on a level with a valley.

In Kensington, Sir David Wilkie, the painter, passed the greater part of his life, after quitting Scotland, and chiefly in Lower Phillimore Place. For nearly three years, beginning with the autumn of 1811, he dates his letters from No. 29, which was the abode of a friend; but he then took one of his own, No. 24, in which he resided with his mother and sister till the autumn of 1824, when he removed with them into the house on the Terrace, called Shaftesbury House, which has since been rebuilt on a larger scale. Why it is called Shaftesbury House, we cannot learn; perhaps because the third Earl of Shaftesbury, the author of the 'Characteristicks,' who was a visitor at the Palace, occupied it for a while before he took his house at Little Chelsea. Probably, there is not an old house in Kensington in which some distinguished person has not resided, during the reigns in which the court was held there.

Wilkie was a gentle, kindly, considerate man, with a figure not insignificant, though not elegant, an arch eye, and a large, good-humoured mouth. Such, at least, was his appearance during the time of life at which we remember him. He had an original genius for depicturing humble life, and could throw into it a dash of the comic; though he did not possess the Flemish and Dutch eye for colour; and there was altogether more truth than enjoyment in his style, sometimes a tendency to dwell on

SIR DAVID WILKIE

moral and even physical pains, the sufferers of which neutralised the sympathy which they needed by a look of sordid dulness.

Hazlitt, out of resentment against the aristocracy for giving their patronage to this kind of art at the expense of higher, of which he thought them jealous (and perhaps, also, in order to vex Wilkie himself, who was very deferential to rank), called it the 'pauper style.' The appellation, we suspect, produced the vexation intended, and was one of the causes of Sir David's efforts to rise into a manner altogether different; in which he was not successful. His notion that the persons in the Old and New Testament should all have the native, that is to say, Syrian or Judaical look, showed the restricted and literal turn of his mind. He fancied that this kind of truth would the more recommend them to the lovers of truth in general; not seeing that the local peculiarity might hurt the universality of the impression; for though all the world feel more or less in the same manner, they are not fond of seeing the manner qualified by that of any one particular nation; especially, too, when the nation has not been associated in their minds with anything very acceptable, or even with acquiescence in the impression to be made. The next step in this direction might be to represent St Paul as a man of an insignificant presence, because the apostle so describes himself; or to get a stammering man to

sit for the portrait of Moses, because the great lawgiver had an impediment in his speech. This is not what Raphael did when he painted Paul preaching at Athens, with mighty, uplifted arms; nor what Michael Angelo did, when he seated Moses in the chair of Sinai, indignantly overlooking all beneath him, and ready to hurl down the tables of stone, like thunderbolts, on the heads of his misbelieving followers. We do not mean to say that lovers of truth might not be found, who would accord with Sir David's opinion, and let good consequences take their chance; but he did not look at the matter in this comprehensive light. He thought that there was no risk of chance, remote or immediate, except in not making the local history local enough; and he did not see that this would have endangered the object he had in view, and served to contract instead of extending it.

Though Wilkie never married, one of the best features in his character was domesticity. He was no sooner rich enough, than he brought his mother and sister from Scotland, in order that they might partake his prosperity in the way most agreeable to family affections. He was also careful to give them news of himself before they came. As it is pleasant to know the daily habits of distinguished men, we give the following account of his life at Kensington from one of his letters to his sister:—

'The anxiety my mother has laboured under

about my health, on seeing that I had not with my own hand directed the newspaper, is entirely groundless. I am as well now as I have been for a very long time, and am going on with the painting in my usual moderate way. I am sometimes glad to get anybody to direct the newspaper on the Monday forenoon, for the sake of saving time, which is an important consideration in these short days. Everybody I meet with compliments me on the improvement of my looks, and I am taking all the means in my power to retain my improved appearance. I dine, as formerly, at two o'clock, paint two hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon, and take a short walk in the park or through the fields twice a day. In the evening, I go on with the mathematics, which I take great delight in; and I have also begun a system of algebra, a study I should like to learn something of too.'

When his mother and sister came, the good artist took care that as much as possible of the old household furniture, to which their eyes had been habituated, should come with them from Scotland; and he said (his biographer informs us) that 'if he were desired to name the happiest hour of his life, it was when he saw his honoured mother and much-loved sister sitting beside him whilst he was painting.'

The 'short walk through the fields' must have been in those between Kensington, Brompton, and

Little Chelsea, now fast disappearing before the growth of streets.

In Shaftesbury House the sunny portion of Wilkie's life terminated in clouds that gathered suddenly and darkly upon him;—his mother dying; his sister losing the man she was about to marry; his eldest brother dead, in India; a second brother coming home to die, from Canada; a younger brother involved in commercial difficulties; and the artist himself, who was too generous not to suffer in every way with his family, losing further money by the failure of houses, and failing in his own health, which he never recovered. Such are the calamities to which comic as well as tragic painters are liable, in order that all men may share and share alike, till 'tears can be wiped from off all faces.' Wilkie subsequently removed to Vicarage Place, in Church Street; and this, his last abode in Kensington, was also his last in England. He travelled for health's and study's sake, in Italy, Germany, and Spain; returned, and travelled again, going to Palestine, and other dominions of the Sultan, whose portrait he painted; made other ineffectual attempts to become an artist out of his first line; and with a strangely romantic end for one who began with the line which he ought never to have forsaken, died on his way home, and was buried off Gibraltar, in the great deep.

After all, there was in Wilkie's character, as there is in most men's, however amusing they may be,

a grave as well as comic side, corresponding with the affectionate portion of it; and this, very likely, it was, that in conjunction with the provocation given him by Hazlitt, and by jealous brother artists, led him to attempt at higher subjects, and a deeper tone in painting. He also appears to have had a delicacy of organisation, tending to the consumptive: though prudence and prosperity kept him alive to the age of fifty-six.

'Nature is vindicated of her children.' The sensibilities of a man of genius turn to good account for his fellow-creatures, compared with whom he is but a unit. Wilkie, himself, enjoyed, as well as suffered: he had a happy fireside during the greater part of his life; he had always an artist's eye, which is itself a remuneration; and he knew that ages to come would find merit in his productions.

Turning northward, out of the high road, between Lower and Upper Phillimore Place, is Hornton Street, at the further house in which, on the right hand, resided for some years Doctor Thomas Frognall Dibdin, the sprightliest of bibliomaniacs. He was not a mere bibliomaniac. He really saw, though not very far, into the merit of the books which he read. He also made some big books of his own, which though, for the most part, of little interest but to little antiquaries, contain passages amusing for their animal spirits and enjoyment. When the Doctor visited libraries on the Continent, he dined with the

monks and others who possessed them, and made a feast-day of it with the gaiety of his company. When he assembled his friends over a new publication, or for the purpose of inspecting a set of old ones, the meeting was what he delighted to call a 'symposium'; that is to say, they drank as well as ate, and were very merry over old books, old words, and what they persuaded themselves was old wine. There would have been a great deal of reason in it all, if the books had been worth as much inside as out; but in a question between the finest of works in plain calf, and one of the fourth or fifth-rate, old and rare, and bound by Charles Lewis, the old book would have carried it hollow. It would even have been read with the greater devotion. However, the mania was harmless, and helped to maintain a proper curiosity into past ages. Tom (for, though a Reverend, and a Doctor, we can hardly think of him seriously), was a good-natured fellow, not very dignified in any respect; but he had the rare merit of being candid. A moderate sum of money was bequeathed him by Douce; and he said he thought he deserved it, from the 'respectful attention' he had always paid to that not very agreeable gentleman. Tom was by no means ill-looking; yet he tells us, that being in company, when he was young, with an elderly gentleman, who knew his father, and the gentleman being asked by somebody whether the son resembled him, 'Not at all!' was

Very merry over old books... and what they persuaded themselves was old wine.

the answer. 'Captain Dibdin was a fine-looking fellow.'

This same father was the real glory of Tom; for the reader must know, that Captain Dibdin was no less a person than the 'Tom Bowling' of the famous sea-song:

> 'Here a sheer hulk lies poor Tom Bowling,
> The darling of our crew.'

Captain Thomas Dibdin was the brother of Charles Dibdin, the songster of the seamen; and an admirable fellow was Charles, and a fine fellow, in every respect, the brother thus fondly recorded by him. 'No more' (continues the song, for the reader will not grudge us the pleasure of calling it to mind)—

> 'No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
> For death has broach'd him too.
>
> His form was of the manliest beauty,
> His heart was kind and soft;
> Faithful below he did his duty,
> But now he's gone aloft.'

Dr Dibdin was thus the nephew of a man of genius, and the son of one of the best specimens of an Englishman. His memory may be content.

The Doctor relates an anecdote of the house opposite him, which he considers equal to any 'Romance of Real Life.' This comes of the antiquarian habit of speaking in superlatives, and expressing amazement at every little thing. As the circumstance, however, is complete of its kind,

CHARLES DIBDIN

and the kind, though not so rare, we suspect, as may be imagined, is not one of everyday occurrence, it may be worth repeating. A handsome widow, it seems, in the prime of life, but in reduced circumstances, and with a family of several children, had been left in possession of the house, and desired to let it. A retired merchant of sixty, who was looking out for a house in Kensington, came to see it. He fell in love with the widow; paid his addresses to her on the spot, in a respectful version of the old question put to the fair showers of such houses, ('Are you, my dear, to be let with the lodgings?'); and after a courtship of six months, was wedded to the extemporaneous object of his affections at Kensington Church, the Doctor himself joyfully officiating as clergyman; for the parties were amiable; the bridegroom was a collector of books; and the books were accompanied by a cellar full of burgundy and champagne.

Returning into the high road, and continuing our path on the Terrace side of the way, we come to Leonard's Place, and to Earl's Court Terrace, in both of which Mrs Inchbald resided for some months, in boarding-houses; in the former, at a Mrs Voysey's; in the latter, at No. 4. Boarding-houses, though their compulsory hours of eating and drinking did not suit her, she found more agreeable than other lodgings, owing to their supplying her with more companionship, and giving her

more to do for her companions. The poor souls in these places appear to need it. Speaking of the kind of hospital at Mrs Voysey's, in the summer of 1818, she says—'All the old widows and old maids of this house are stretched upon beds or sofas, with swollen legs, nervous headaches, or slow fevers; brought on by loss of appetite, broken sleep, and other dog-day complaints; while I am the only young and strong person among them, and am called upon to divert their blue devils from bringing them to an untimely end. I love to be of importance; and so the present society is flattering to my vanity.'

She was then sixty-five. What a god-send to the poor creatures she must have been! A woman of genius, very entertaining, full of anecdote and old stories, and though so young in mind, yet of an age bodily to keep them in heart with themselves, and so make hope to live on.

At the back of Earl's Terrace was, and is, a curious pretty, little spot, called Edwardes Square, after the family name of Lord Kensington; and in this Square Mrs Inchbald must often have walked, for the inhabitants of the Terrace have keys to it, and it gives them a kind of larger garden. We have called the spot curious as well as pretty, and so it is in many respects,—in one of them contradictory to the prettiness, for one side of the Square is formed of the backs and garden-

Edwardes Square

walls of the Earl's Terrace houses, and the opposite side of it coach-houses, and of little tenements that appear to have been made out of them. The whole of this latter side, however, is plastered, and partly overgrown with ivy, so as to be rather an ornament than an eyesore. But what chiefly surprises the spectator, when he first sees the place, is the largeness, as well as cultivated look of the square, compared with the smallness of the houses on two sides of it. The gardener's lodge, also, is made to look like a Grecian temple, really in good taste; and though the grass is not as thick and soft as it might be, nor the flowers as various, and pathways across the grass had better have been straight than winding (there being no inequalities of ground to render the winding natural), yet, upon the whole, there is such an unexpected air of size, greenness, and even elegance in the place, especially when its abundant lilacs are in blossom, and ladies are seen on its benches reading, that the stroller, who happens to turn out of the road, and comes upon the fresh-looking sequestered spot for the first time, is interested as well as surprised, and feels curious to know how a square of any kind, comparatively so large, and, at the same time, manifestly so cheap (for the houses, though neat and respectable, are too small to be dear), could have suggested itself to the costly English mind. Upon inquiry, he finds it to have been the work of a Frenchman.

The story is, that the Frenchman built it at the time of the threatened invasion from France; and that he adapted the large square and the cheap little houses to the promenading tastes and poorly-furnished pockets of the ensigns and lieutenants of Napoleon's army; who, according to his speculation, would certainly have been on the lookout for some such place, and here would have found it. Here, thought he, shall be cheap lodging and *fête champêtre* combined; here, economy in-doors, and Watteau without; here, repose after victory; promenades; *la belle passion*; perusal of newspapers on benches; an ordinary at the Holland Arms,—a French Arcadia in short, or a little Palais Royal, in an English suburb. So runs the tradition; we do not say how truly, though it could hardly have entered an English head to invent it.

It was allowable for French imaginations in those days to run a little wild, on the strength of Napoleon's victories. We do not repeat the story for the sake of saying how wild. We believe that both Frenchmen and Englishmen, at present, for reasons best known to all Governments, not actually out of their senses, are for keeping to their localities as peaceably and regularly as possible; and we devoutly hope they may continue to do so, not only for the sake of the two greatest nations in Europe, but for that of the security of advancement For it is better to advance gently,

however slowly, than to be incessantly thrown back from one extreme to another; and the world and right opinion will progress as surely as time does, whatever efforts despots and bigots may make to put back the clock.

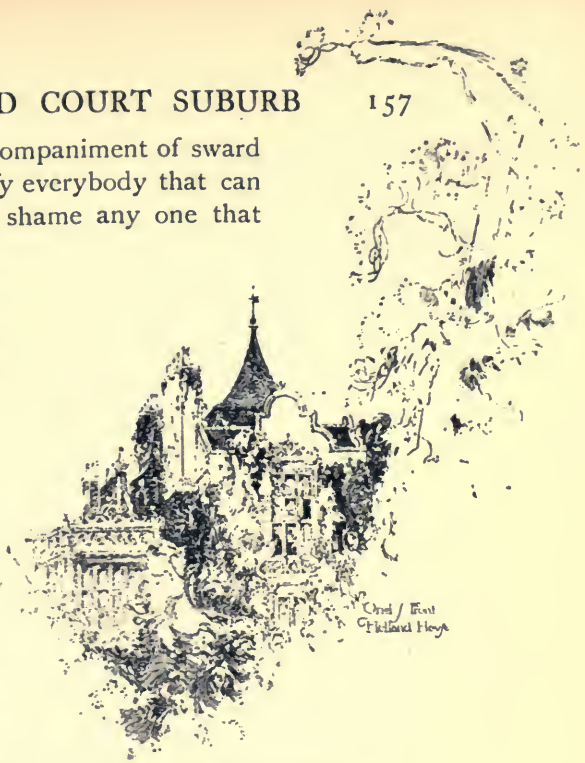
It is said, in Kensington, that Coleridge once had lodgings in Edwardes Square. We do not find the circumstance in his biographies, though he once lived in the neighbouring village of Hammersmith. Perhaps, he was on a visit to a friend; for we are credibly informed, that he used to be seen walking in the square. A lady, who was a child at the time, is very proud of his having spoken to her, and given her a kiss.

S. T. COLERIDGE

CHAPTER TWELVE

HOLLAND HOUSE is the only important mansion, venerable for age and appearance, which is now to be found in the neighbourhood of London. There has been talk more than once of pulling it down; but every feeling of memory seems to start up at the threat, and cry, No, No! The cry is not only one of the utmost parliamentary propriety: the weight of the whole voice of the metropolis may be said to be in it; nay, of the nation itself; and even of the civilised world; for what court or diplomatist that knows of the 'Whigs,' knows not of 'Holland House'? or what foreigner, with any taste for English wit and localities, visits London without going to see it? It is not handsome; it is not ancient; but it is of an age sufficient to make up for want of beauty; it shows us how our ancestors built before Shakspeare died; a crowd of the reigning wits and beauties of that, and every succeeding generation, passes through it to the 'mind's eye,' brilliant with life and colour; and there it stands yet, on its old rising ground,

with its proper accompaniment of sward and trees, to gratify everybody that can appreciate it, and shame any one that would do it wrong. May it everlastingly be repaired, and never look otherwise than past times beheld it.



The upper apartments of Holland House are on a level with the stone gallery of the dome of St Paul's. Their front windows command a view of the Surrey hills; as those of the back do of Harrow, Hampstead, and Highgate.

When this interesting old mansion came into the possession of the present lord, seeing the masons at work, and finding one of the approaches to it stopped up, we trembled at what he might be going to do with it. That approach was called Nightingale Lane, and had long been a favourite with the Kensingtonians; for besides enabling them to get closer to the nightingales, it afforded

them a passage right in front of the house. This passage was now closed; a parapet wall was taking the place of it; two stone piers, designed by Inigo Jones, disappeared from the courtyard; and everything looked as if the appearance of the house itself was about to be altered.

The alarm, however, proved false. The house, externally, remained untouched; and when the stone piers, not very intelligible in their previous distance from one another, were found composing a gate at the side of it, and vases of geraniums made their appearance on the parapet wall, and orange trees came in front of the geraniums, and the shut-up lane was compounded for by a new one, which, though it led only by a side of the house, opened a more convenient passage to Notting Hill, and was furnished, moreover, with a bench like those in the parks, to give a resting-place to passengers themselves (persons not too often cared for in aristocratical changes), the alterations, though producing an effect perhaps not thoroughly harmonious between the northern architecture and its southern accompaniments, could not but be acknowledged to be improvements in the main, and to have rendered the entire spot more remarkable and attractive.

The aged look of the exterior of Holland House is the more precious to the antiquary, inasmuch as with the exception of a staircase or so, it is

the only part of its antiquity remaining. The interior has long been so modernised, that a lover of old times is grieved to find not a single room in it which brings them before him. There is little which is older than the youth of the late lord, and much that has been further modernised by the present. The fact is, that the house had become so neglected during the nonage of the former, in consequence of the reckless expenditures of the first lord and his son Charles (the great Whig leader), that there was talk of converting it into a workhouse. Lord Holland, a respecter of old associations, and of the pleasures of other people, saved it; and this circumstance should be counted among the claims to respect of his own genial memory.

The lodge, which the new lord has renovated and doubled, is in a style suitable to the mansion; with the exception, perhaps, of the two footway entrances, which look a little flimsy. The retention of the gilding on the iron gates may be objected to by some, as partaking of the same character; but we think otherwise. The gilding is but partial; it relieves (to our eyes) the sombreness of the iron; and, being confined to the ornamental portion of the work, gives it a kind of golden efflorescence. We have not enough of this kind of work in England; do not sufficiently avail ourselves of the bright lights and colours that we

might bring to bear on our sombre climate. To see, on a dark, wet, muddy day, all the people going along in dark or brown colours, everything looking dingy or insipid—the houses insipid, the carts and wagons insipid, most of the carriages equally so, and the faces either to match or full of care, the circumstances all seem to conspire with the weather to cut as miserable an appearance as possible; as though the passengers were tacitly saying,

'Let us all be unhappy together.'

We are aware that there is a 'harmony' in the spectacle; but it is a wretched harmony; and we think a little cheerful discord would be better. Nobody objects to a rainbow. Flowers, protected by verandahs in balconies, are welcome to the eyes in any weather. There are colours that suit darkness; and a good diffusion of them at such times would be a god-send. For our parts, we always feel grateful on a rainy day, when we see a market woman go by in a red cloak.

Of the lawn, or rather meadow, which lies in front of Holland House, there is a tradition that Cromwell and Ireton conferred in it, as a place in which they could not be overheard. From circumstances hereafter to be noticed, the tradition is probable. It shows that whatever the subject of the conference

may have been, they could not have objected to being seen; for there was neither wall, nor even trees, we believe, at that time in front of the house, as there is now; and we may fancy royalists riding by, on their road to Brentford, where the king's forces were defeated, and trembling to see the two grim republicans laying their heads together.

The grounds at the back of the house are more extensive than might be supposed, and contain many fine old trees of various kinds, with spots of charming seclusion. The portion nearest the house presents an expanse of turf of the most luxurious description, with a most noble elm-tree upon it, and an alcove facing the west, in which there is a couplet that was put up by the late lord in honour of Mr Rogers, and a copy of verses by Mr Luttrell, expressing his inability to emulate the poet. The couplet is as follows:—

> 'Here Rogers sat, and here for ever dwell,
> To me, those pleasures that he sang so well.'
>
> VLL. HD.

Inscriptions challenge comments; brief ones, it is thought, ought in particular to be faultless; seats in summer time, and loungings about on luxurious turfs (half-an-hour before dinner), beget the most exacting criticisms; and thus a nice question has arisen, whether the relative pronoun in this couplet ought to be *that* or *which*. Our first impression was

in favour of *that*; but happening to repeat the lines next morning while in the act of waking, we involuntarily said *which*; upon which side of the question we are accordingly prepared to fight, with all the inveteracy of deserters from the other.

Lord Holland's couplet is in the simple and tranquil taste which he had so much right to admire; Mr Luttrell's verses, which are a score longer, would have been improved by compression. They are a sample of the difference which they themselves speak of, between natural and artificial writing, or that which is prompted by what is felt, and that which would emulate the expression of others. The old eighteenth-century fashion of rhyming with its 'heart and impart, rove, grove,' etc., is here (literally) in all its glory. But see how pleasant and readable are one or two natural expressions:

. . . . . .

'Well, now I am fairly installed in the bower,
How lovely the scene! how propitious the hour!
The breeze is perfumed, from the hawthorn it stirs
All is silent around me—but nothing occurs;
Not a thought, I protest, though I'm here and alone;
Not a chance of a couplet that Rogers would own;
Though my senses are raptur'd, my feelings in tune,
And Holland's my host, and the season is June.

. . . . . .

So I rise, since the Muses continue to frown,
No more of a poet than when I sat down.'

Chloes & Delias ..... enjoyed their flower-beds.

Beyond this mossy lawn is the open undulating ground, terminated by the Uxbridge Road, with which the public have become acquainted by means of the Highland Pastimes; all round the grounds is a rustic lane, furnishing a long leafy walk; on the western side of the house are small gardens, both in new and old styles, the work of the late Lady Holland, and the latter very properly retained, both as a variety from the former, and as a fitting accompaniment to the old house. It is also pleasant to fancy in what sort of way our grandmothers and great-grandmothers, the Chloes and Delias of the eighteenth century, enjoyed their flower-beds. In one of these gardens was raised the first specimen of that beautiful flower, the dahlia, which the late Lord Holland is understood to have brought from Spain; in another, on a pedestal, is a colossal bust of Napoleon, by a pupil of Canova; further west, towards the Addison Road, are the Moats; which (to say nothing of the evidence furnished by an apocryphal bit of brickwork that accompanies them) are looked upon as the site of the older mansion belonging to the De Veres; and further still, a few years ago, was an expiatory classical altar, erected by the same lord, in memory of the fate of poor Lord Camelford, a man half out of his wits, who was killed on this spot in a duel which he insisted on provoking. We know not why it was removed; probably to efface the melancholy impression.

The bust of Napoleon is inscribed with a felicitous quotation from Homer:

> Ου γαρ πω τεθνηκεν επι χθονι διος Οδυσσευς,
> Αλλ' ετι που ζωος κατερυκεται ευρει ποντω,
> Νησω εν αμφιρυτη· χαλεποι δε μιν ανδρες εχουσιν.

'Which' (says the person who is speaking on the passage in Mr Faulkner's 'History of Kensington,' and whom we take to have been the late Lord Holland himself) 'I have seen somewhere translated thus:

> 'He is not dead; he breathes the air
> In lands beyond the deep!
> Some distant sea-girt island, where
> Harsh men the hero keep.'

The translation is probably his lordship's own.* Upon this inscription it may be observed, that harsh men certainly had the keeping of the hero; who had been, however, a harsh man himself, and kept thousands of men in worse durance. But his keepers were not only harsh; they were mean and shabby; refused him a title in his adversity, which they were prepared to acknowledge had he consented to their terms, when they doubted the issue of the contest; and they suffered him to be worried by a set of men incapable of understanding him, except as

* The account of Holland House in Faulkner's book is written in a style wholly different from the rest of it; and instead of being used as the writer must have intended, betrays other evidences of having been clumsily taken into its pages in the lump.

jailers. It was the revenge of long-defeated dulness upon fallen genius, and is a blot in the history of England's greatness.

The altar in memory of Lord Camelford was an ancient Roman one, erected on a modern base, and was inscribed with a propitiatory dedication to departed souls, or the gods who preside over places of the dead—a curious instance of classical 'making as if'—of playing at Paganism on so serious an occasion. It was quite, however, in the taste of the last century, and was a local relief to the imagination.

'Hoc Diis Manibus Voto Discordiam Deprecamur.'

(Thus devoutly honouring the Dii Manes we deprecate dissension.)

Lord Camelford's body, however, is not here. With the passion for going to extremes, which characterised him, he directed that it should be buried under a tree in a solitary spot in Switzerland, which had interested him during his travels. He was a Pitt, nephew to the great Earl of Chatham, who wrote him letters when a boy, that show

how little sometimes can be done in directing the future career even of a child otherwise intelligent, who has been born, from whatever cause, with a certain wildness in his blood. The poor youth, who came to his end before he was thirty, was wildness itself in

Where Lord Comelford was Killed

many respects, though he was fond of serious studies. His manners were perfect at times, but at others would burst out into arrogance and insolence. He was a Christian, it is said, upon conviction, and yet could quarrel with a man about a prostitute, and insist upon fighting him, notwithstanding all that could be done to adjust the difference. The reason

he gave was, that his antagonist was too good a shot to make it up with. The antagonist was a Mr Best. Lord Camelford went up to him in Stevens's Hotel in Bond Street, and addressed him in the following placid words: 'Mr Best, I am glad to see you face to face, and to tell you you are an infamous scoundrel.' He afterwards confessed, like a gentleman, that he had been the aggressor.

But an old house is not perfect without a ghost, and Holland House has two. They do not indeed haunt it, and were very transient in their appearance; but they will serve to give a bit of ghostly interest to the spot, for those whose imaginations like to 'catch a fearful joy' on such points. The account is in Aubrey's 'Miscellanies,' which were written in the reign of William the Third.

'The beautiful Lady Diana Rich, daughter to the Earl of Holland, as she was walking in her father's garden at Kensington, to take the fresh air before dinner, about eleven o'clock, being then very well, met with her own apparition, habit and everything, as in a looking-glass. About a month after, she died of the small-pox. And it is said, that her sister, the Lady Isabella Thynne, saw the like of herself also, before she died. This account I had from a person of honour.'

Aubrey, though his gossip is valuable to a lover of books, was credulous to excess. It is impossible, however, to say what visions may not be seen by

people in bad states of health—what actual images the imagination, in certain morbid states of the brain, may not bring before the eye. Nicolai, the German bookseller, was in the habit of seeing spectral men and women pass through his room; and a sick young lady, just dressed for dinner, and full of thought of herself, sickly or otherwise, might as well see her own image as that of any one else.

The Lady Isabella Thynne, here mentioned, wife of one of the ancestors of the Marquis of Bath, is mentioned in another of Aubrey's books (the 'Lives and Letters of Eminent Men') as addicted to anything but ghostly communications. She and a friend of hers, he says, while on a visit to Oxford, used to come to morning prayers at Trinity College Chapel, 'half-dressed, like angels.' She would also make her entrance upon the college walks, with a 'lute playing before her'; and must have been a great puzzle to the college ethics, for she is described as possessing all kinds of virtues but one. She is the 'Lady Isabella' whose playing on the lute is recorded in a set of complimentary verses by Waller:

> 'The trembling strings about her fingers crowd,
> And tell their joy for every kiss aloud;
> Small force there needs to make them tremble so;
> Touch'd by that hand, who would not tremble, too?'

We think we have read somewhere, but cannot call to mind in what book, that she suffered a good deal of affliction before she died.

The Ghostly Avenue

So much for Holland House and its grounds, as the latter appear at present, and the former has continued to look for many generations. We now proceed to its interior, to its inmates, and to those who went before them in the possession of the estate; that is to say, the possessors of the older house which is now gone, as well as those which have occupied the one before us.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

We have observed and regretted, that the interior of Holland House has been so modernised, as, with little exception, to retain no appearance of the antiquity to be expected from its appearance outside. We found, nevertheless, so much to interest us in it (the conversation included of the gallant kinsman of the family, who was so kind as to do us the honour of being our cicerone), that, as is too often the case with something one is bent upon recollecting, we forgot to ask for the chamber in which Addison died. We believe, however, it is among the few apartments that are not shown. Among those which are, is Charles Fox's bedroom; that of Mr Rogers (a frequent visitor), with a poet's view over the country towards Harrow; and that of Sheridan, in the next room to which a servant was regularly in attendance all night; partly to furnish, we believe, a bottle of champagne to the thirsty orator in case he should happen to call for one betwixt his slumbers (at least we heard so a long while ago, and it was quite in keeping with his

noble host's hospitality; but we forgot to verify the anecdote on this occasion) and partly (of this there is no doubt) to secure the bed curtains from being set on fire by his candle.

A pleasanter apartment to contemplate, is the one in which Lord Holland used to hear his children say their lessons, and induct them into the beauties of Spenser—an unexpected trait in the predilections of a man of letters brought up in the town tastes of the eighteenth century. But his uncle Charles was fond of Spenser; and so was Burke, and the great Earl of Chatham. It is difficult to hinder great men from discerning the merits of greatness. The poetry of Spenser was to their other books what their parks and retirements were to the town itself.

The library must originally have been a greenhouse or conservatory; for, in its first condition, it appears to have been scarcely anything but windows; and it is upwards of ninety feet long, by only seventeen feet four inches wide, and fourteen feet seven inches in height. The moment one enters it, one looks at the two ends, and thinks of the tradition about Addison's pacings in it to and fro. It represents him as meditating his 'Spectators' between two bottles of wine, and comforting his ethics by taking a glass of each, as he arrived at each end of the room. The regularity of this procedure is, of course, a jest; but the main circumstance is not improbable, though Lord Holland seems to have

thought otherwise. He says (for the words in Faulkner's Kensington are evidently his): 'Fancy may trace the exquisite humour which enlivens his papers to the mirth inspired by wine; but there is too much sober, good sense in all his lucubrations, even when he indulges most in pleasantry, to allow us to give implicit credit to a tradition invented, probably, as excuse for intemperance by such as can empty two bottles of wine, but never produce a "Spectator" or a "Freeholder."' We shall return to Addison's alleged habit of drinking by-and-by.

The first Lord Holland made a family portrait-gallery of this room; and the accumulated books of the late Lord forced the pictures into other apartments, though still he put many portraits above them, of friends, kinsfolk, and deceased men of letters, with Addison at their head. When we lately saw the room, there were no pictures at all; and the ceiling had been converted into a starry firmament; hardly, perhaps, the most suitable thing, either to the ceiling itself, which is full of concavities, or to the winter's enjoyment of a book by the fireside. But the alterations of the house, we believe, are not yet final; and everybody surely would miss the presence of Addison.

The collection of books is celebrated for its abundance of Italian and Spanish authors, the former in particular. Among the curiosities in other languages are an 'Editio Princeps' of Homer, which belonged

to Fox; a copy of the same poet belonging to Sir Isaac Newton, with a distich in his handwriting on the fly-leaf; and a singularly interesting one of Camoens, which it is alleged must have been in the hands of the poet himself. At the bottom of the title-page is a painful corroboration of the statements respecting his end. It is a manuscript note in an old Spanish hand, stating that the writer 'saw him die in a hospital, without even a blanket to cover him.' 'He did this,' says he, 'after having triumphed in the East (Camoens served in various expeditions) and traversed five thousand five hundred leagues of ocean: and all for what, but to study day and night to no better purpose than spiders to catch flies?'

A natural question enough to the first impulse of indignation. And the blush of Portugal at the fate of Camoens ought to be as great and lasting, as the glory with which

he has covered her. But the death of a man is not his life; nor must the struggles of a poet make us forget his enjoyments. Camoens triumphed with his fellow-soldiers; was long the admiration of the circles in which he moved; knew the glory which awaited his name; and above all, must have so loved and enjoyed his gift of poetry, that in all probability, during the far greater part of his life, he would not have changed lots with the most prosperous man in his country. His end, indeed, is most pitiable, enough to bring tears into the eyes of the gallantest fellow-soldier. It is said, that before he was taken to the hospital, a faithful servant used actually to go out and beg for him. It requires all the good and all the pleasure given to the world by such men's productions, to enable us to think of their sufferings with patience. But it does enable us. The ways of Providence are vindicated. The fine heart is broken; but the earth, to all time, is filled with its fragrance.

There are several curious manuscripts in the library, particularly three autograph letters of Petrarch, three autograph plays of Lope de Vega, the original copy of a play of the younger Moratin, and the music of Metastasio's 'Olimpiade' beautifully written out by Jean Jacques Rousseau, at the time when that 'shaker of the thrones of Europe' got his livelihood by work of that kind.

It is by no means the least interesting circum-

stance connected with this library, that Lord Holland, its collector, really enjoyed his books. The reader might guess as much from the nature of them; and we shall have reasons for being assured of it as we go. At present, we have more to do with the house than with its possessors.

The collection of pictures is not remarkable, except as containing a greater number of portraits of men of letters, Italians in particular, than is to be found perhaps in any other private abode. Among them is Addison, when he was young (a handsome face); Alfieri (in miniature), the Italian tragic poet, who was some time in England; his wife (another miniature); the Countess of Albany, widow of the Pretender (a princess of the house of Stolberg); Sir Philip Francis; Robespierre (miniature), with his pert, insignificant look, on which nobody would have guessed that so much tragedy was hanging; Jerome Bonaparte (a narrow-minded, repulsive countenance); two portraits, large and small, if we mistake not, of the Duchess of Portsmouth (Louise de Querouaille, Charles the Second's mistress), quite making out, in one of them, the 'baby face' of which Evelyn accuses her, nobody would have taken her for an ancestress of the manly-visaged Foxes; many portraits of the rest of the family; a fine one of Talleyrand, by Schetter; and one, by Gerard, of Napoleon at Fontainebleau.

There are also busts of Napoleon, of Machiavel, and of Henry the Fourth, the last 'looking like a

goat'; a curious painting by Sir Joshua (of which more by-and-by), consisting of whole-length portraits of Charles Fox, when a youth, with his fair relatives, Lady Sarah Lennox and Lady Susan Strangeways; and another, by Hogarth, representing Dryden's play of the 'Indian Emperor,' performed by children, one of whom is a grand-niece of Sir Isaac Newton, whose bust is on the chimney-piece. The play was performed for the amusement of the Duke of Cumberland, who is seated accordingly; and the governess playing with one of the children is Lady Deloraine, whom the reader will find acting a more curious part, when we come, in these Kensington memorabilia, to the Palace.

Sundial and Garden Alcove

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

We now come, not only to the possessors of the present house, but to those of the one that preceded it; and therefore must go a good way back, before we return to the Foxes.

We have seen, in a former chapter, that, with the exception of an Anglo-Saxon in the time of Edward the Confessor, of whom nothing further is mentioned, and of the Bishop of Coutances, to whom William the Conqueror gave it with power to alienate; the De Veres, Earls of Oxford, were the earliest recorded possessors of the manor of Kensington, and seated probably on the spot in question. It is not ascertained that such was the case; but as the property was valuable, was convenient for its neighbourhood to London, and seems to be implied as residential in the name of the adjoining locality, Earl's Court that is to say, the court for administering the Earl's property or jurisdiction, it is extremely improbable, that none of the family ever occupied it. It was associated with their name from the time of William the Conqueror to that of James the First.

Aubrey de Vere, its first holder under the Bishop, must needs have visited his property some time or other, or for what did he come with the Conqueror into England? The ancient manor-house that stood not far from the present Holland House, must have been built for somebody; and visions of Aubrey and his successors, however transient, naturally present themselves to the eye of the local antiquary.

This Aubrey de Vere came from Holland with the first William, as countrymen of his did afterwards with William the Third. He died, however, a monk; perhaps out of penitence for the wrongs which he had committed as a soldier. The title of Earl of Oxford came into the family with his grandson. Almost all his successors were stirring soldiers and influential subjects. One of them was a Magna Charta baron; another a commander at the battles of Cressy and Poitiers; another at Agincourt; another was the great lord who received Henry the Seventh at his house with such a magnificent show of retainers, and who, notwithstanding his having been one of the chief instruments in setting that money-scraper on the throne, was fined by his sharp-eyed and shabby visitor, for entertaining him at a cost beyond the law.

The family branched out into congenial worthies, a daughter of one of whom, the 'starry Vere' of some noble verses by Marvell, was the Lady Fairfax, who gave that brave contradiction, in Westminster

Hall, to the assertion that all the people of England were indicters of Charles the First;—'No! not the hundredth part of them.' In short, the word Vere was almost synonymous in English history with whatsoever was noble and dignified, when in its twentieth Earl of Oxford, it came to a sorry end in the person of a profligate time-server, who accommodated himself to every Court in succession —Tory, Commonwealth, and Whig, and who crowned his anti-heroical achievements by cheating an actress with a false marriage.

The Kensington property, however, was saved the disgrace of belonging to this scoundrel; for he died long after it had been carried, by a co-heiress, into the families of Argyle and others, who sold it to Sir Walter Cope, the builder of Holland House.

But before we part with the Veres, we have a quarrel to pick with the whole of them, or rather with their name, and with the Vere, whosoever he was, who first gave them their motto, *Vero Nihil Verius*—Nothing truer than true; that is to say, *pun-ically* speaking, Nothing more veritable than Vere. For the fact is, saving their Lordships' valours (and we think we see their dust redden as we say it—but it is the inventor's fault, not ours), the motto is a lie. Vere does not mean 'true.' The family came from Holland; the word in Dutch is written Weer; it is the name of the place in the isle of Walcheren, which the owners

quitted for drier quarters; and the word means neither more nor less than the same word in English—weir or wear; that is to say, a dam, fish-trap, or flood-gate. 'Aubrey de Vere' is as fine an aristocratical sound as can well be imagined, and it is a pity to spoil it; but truth must be told. Aubrey de Vere means Aubrey of the dam, fish-trap, or flood-gate. *Amicus Vere, sed magis amica veritas.* The inventor of the motto, had he loved the truth as much as he did a pun, should have taken a dam for his crest, with the words, *Verus Bataviniter*—True as I'm a Dutchman.

In short, the Veres originated with the coasters or others, whoever they were, a hardy, painstaking race, ancestors of the Vandykes and Vandammes,—who, according to the witty poet, fished up Holland out of the sea, and who obtained distinction with one another in proportion to their success in the invention of shovels, and consolidations of a ditch.

> 'For as with pigmies, who best kills the crane,
> Among the hungry who best treasures grain,
> Among the blind the one-eyed blinkard reigns,
> So rules among the drownèd he that drains.
> Not who first sees the rising sun, commands;
> But who could first discern the rising lands:
> Who best could know to pump an earth so leak,
> Him they their lord and country's father speak:
> To make a bank was a great plot of state;—
> Invent a shovel, and be a magistrate.'

The Dutch Garden.
Holland House

It may be added, to complete the notice of the Veres, that the present representation of the race is in the Beauclerk family, the daughter of the last lord having married the first Duke of St Albans, the son of Charles the Second by Nell Gwynn. The two fathers, it is to be feared, helped to spoil, for a time, the blood of the actress; for Sidney Beauclerk, their grandson (father of Johnson's Topham Beauclerk), is said to have been as great a 'raf' as either of them, without inheriting any of the royal wit. This could not be said of Topham, however he might have resembled the king in more respects than one; for though Johnson, in one of the most extraordinary compliments on record, told him 'his body was all vice,' he added that 'his mind was all virtue'; a combination of totals which, to the doctor's surprise, Beauclerk did not seem happy to admit. Something of such a mixture of extremes is, however, not impossible as the world goes; so here, we are to imagine, was a blink of the 'starry Vere' shining on the mud of the debauchees.

But we are losing sight of Holland House. Sir Walter Cope, the purchaser of the Vere property in Kensington, seems to have been one of the money-getters, who profited by the endeavours which James the First made to supply his lavish exchequer without the help of a Parliament. He built the house, or rather the main body of the house (the centre and turrets), about the year 1607, and bequeathed

it to Henry Rich, Earl of Holland, as the husband of his daughter and heiress, Isabella. The wings and arcades were added by the Earl.

This Earl of Holland was the younger son of Robert Rich, first Earl of Warwick, by Penelope, daughter of Queen Elizabeth's Earl of Essex, the Stella of Sir Philip Sidney. He was a handsome, showy man; was a favourite with James's favourite, the Duke of Buckingham; and had the reputation of being more than in the good graces of Charles the First's queen; probably on no other ground than the fact of his having fetched her as a bride from France, and been coxcombical in his attentions on the way.

He and his friend, Hay, Earl of Carlisle, were the twin stars of the great world, next after patron Buckingham; and Holland House, during the prosperous portion of Rich's career, must have entertained in its saloons all the rank and fashion of the time. Among others came Bassompierre, the French Ambassador, who with the *dandy* indifference of his countrymen respecting the orthographies of other countries, or because he was too fine a gentleman to hear the word properly from the first, has recorded Kensington under the mincing appellation of *Stintinton.*

'*Wednesday* 25.—Dined with the Earl of Holland at Stintinton.'*

* So, on a visit to him at Hampton Court, he calls that village *Imtincourt*—

Unfortunately, Rich's coxcombry made him oversensitive to what he thought attentions or the reverse from ruling powers, and in the Civil Wars he went to and fro in his partisanship with so provoking a caprice, now playing the part of a knight-errant for king and queen, and now sulking at Holland House and receiving visits from the disaffected for some imaginary affront, that when the Parliament at last seized him and put him to death for making a stand against the death of the king, his end was a grief to nobody. Foppish to the last, he died in a white satin waistcoat, and a cap ditto with silver lace.

Five months after the Earl's execution, Holland House was occupied by the Parliamentary General Fairfax, husband of the 'starry Vere,' who thus found herself, under very extraordinary circumstances, contemplating the property of her ancestors. A journal of the day says, 'The Lord General (Fairfax) is removed from Queen Street to the late Earl of Holland's house at Kensington, where he intends to reside.' (This Queen Street is the present Queen Street in Lincoln's Inn Fields, then one of the most fashionable quarters in London.) It was at this period we are to suppose Cromwell and Ireton conferring on the lawn.

'Went to see the Earl of Holland, who was sick at Imtincourt.'

(Le Vendredy 16.—Je fus voir le Comte de Hollande, malade à Imtincourt. Le Mercredi 25.—Je fus diner chez le Comte de Hollande á Stintinton.)

The mansion, however, was soon restored to the earl's widow and her children; and from that time it remained quietly in the possession of the family, almost as long as they lasted. The Earl and his wife, like the extinguished court, had been friends of the drama; and for a few days during the first establishment of the republic, and a longer period in the reign of Cromwell, the players, who had been great loyalists, and who contrived to perform secretly now and then at noblemen's houses, where purses were collected for their benefit, found special encouragement in the house before us.

From the Restoration to the time of the Georges, Holland House appears to have been let by the noble owners on short leases, and to a variety of persons; sometimes in apartments to lodgers; or, more probably, a friend was now and then accommodated for nothing. Among these various occupants, the duration of whose abodes in the house is unknown, the names of the following have transpired:—

Arthur Annesley, first Earl of Anglesea, so created by Charles the Second. He had been President of the Council at the close of the Protectorate, and opened the correspondence with the restored king.

Sir John Chardin, the traveller. He was a French Protestant, and a jeweller. He settled in England, and was knighted by Charles the Second; probably by way of payment on account, for some bill sent

There is a rumour that Cromwell and Ireton conferred here.

in and delivered to Madame the Duchess of Portsmouth, of Cleveland, or of Mazarin.

The fantastical Duchess of Buckinghamshire — Catherine Darnley—illegitimate daughter of James the Second, who took upon her the state of a princess. Her first husband was one of the Anglesea family before mentioned.

From a passage in one of the letters of his daughter, Mrs Morice, it is not improbable that the famous Jacobite bishop, Atterbury, who was very intimate with the duchess, had once apartments in this house. It is certain that his daughter and her husband lived there; for some of their letters to the bishop, ranging over a space of several years, are dated from it. This is the daughter, whose going to meet him in exile, and meeting him only to die, has given so affecting a turn to the last days of the proud and turbulent prelate. He appears to have been a loving father. Atterbury's books were preserved in Holland House during his exile, and apartments were kept ready for him by Mr Morice, in case of his return.

But the most interesting of the temporary lodgers in Holland House was the famous William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania. By a singular piece of negligence in our memorandum making, owing, most probably, to the hurry of the very interest we were taking in the account of the man, we omitted, in our first edition of this book, to mention the fact of

Penn's having lived for a while in Kensington; and it was not till we met with a subsequent account of him, that we became aware of his having resided in this particular house. 'The house was large,' says his biographer, Mr Dixon, 'and he had many visitors. His influence with the King (James II.) was well known, and every man with a real grievance found in him a counsellor and a friend. Envoys were sent from the American colonies to solicit his influence in their behalf; members of his own, and other religious bodies, who had petitions to present, crowded to his levees: and sometimes not less than an hundred persons were in attendance at his hour of rising.'

This was at the time when James, in his zeal for Popery, was pretending to love Penn's great principle of universal toleration. Penn had always had access to him, as the son of Admiral Penn; and the access at this period gave him singular influence, and was thought to have given him more.

Unfortunately, we became acquainted with this particular respecting Holland House too closely upon the call for a second edition of our book, to enable us to speak of Penn at any length proportionate to his merit; otherwise, he was a man of so rare and admirable a nature, and we entertain, on many accounts, so special a love for his memory, that we should have indulged ourselves with endeavouring to reconcile some apparently conflicting

accounts of him, and to condense the many interesting circumstances of his career into such a summary, as might not have been inadmissible into a book of anecdote. But as it is, we must content ourselves with noticing two points respecting his character and manners;—one upon which we cannot but think he has been under-rated by an admirable historian; and another, in which singularly wrong conclusions have been drawn respecting his personal appearance and demeanour.

The first is the extraordinary regard entertained for him by Charles and James the Second, and the doubt it has thrown on the entire sincerity of his nature; the conclusion, not unnatural in some points of view, being, that to be able to please such men, and to possess any special influence with them in favour even of that toleration of religious opinion which they pretended to fall in with at times for their own purposes, argued a suspicious amount of flattery in the man, or at least of disreputable expediency. But we take the whole secret of the matter to have been this—that Penn was one of that kind of men, very rare, it is true—not unreasonably to be met with caution in the first instance,—and certainly not to be looked for in courts, except under rarest circumstances,—who being thoroughly honest of intention, and sincere in speech, do nevertheless succeed in being acceptable with men of every kind, by the simple circumstance of knowing

how to do justice to the good qualities which all human beings, more or less, mingle with their infirmities. It is thus that they acquire with them a privilege of dissent, and even of remonstrance, astonishing even to those who are aware that kings are men too. It is not, we think, sufficiently considered by objectors in this instance, that, as men, even kings can be charmed, perhaps more too than other men, with realising a nature at once sincere and loving, and being made sure of the realisation by finding the sincerity never doubting what is good in them, because the love never pretends affection to what is ill. Penn, who had a lively flow of conversation, and who had been familiar with the royal brothers from his youth, through the connection above noticed and the natural sweetness of his own disposition, could be cheerful with Charles, serious with James, and singularly acceptable with both, because the one found in him a virtuous man, singularly full of animal spirits and good-nature, and the other a man able to be grave and in earnest, without believing all earnestness confined to men of his own opinion.

The other point is of no importance compared with this; but it is not uncurious or unamusing. We allude to the strange misrepresentation of Penn's appearance and time of life in West's popular picture of his Treaty with the Indians. The ordinary notion of Penn in people's imaginations, in conse-

quence of this picture, of the popular idea of the sect which he joined, and of a particular species of costume which he never wore (for it arose with a subsequent generation) is that of a Quaker of the common well-meaning sort, who had spirit enough to lay the foundations of a state, but was rather a heavy kind of man than otherwise both in mind and body, and as much disposed to take the worldly-wise view of the prosperity of a country, as any money-maker who joined him.

Now Penn was as much the reverse of all this, as the elements of things are from their adulterations, or grace and vivacity from the lumpishness of a Dutch feeder. Penn joined the Quakers, not because he was a formalist, but because he agreed with their liberal views of Christianity and toleration, and because he thought them as sincere and single-hearted as himself. His dress was only a simpler modification of his usual attire ; and instead of being the corpulent elderly person he appears in Mr West's picture, he was at that time, says Mr Dixon, but 'thirty-eight years old ; light and graceful in form,' and according to a lady who was an eye-witness of the ceremony, 'the handsomest, best-looking, most lively gentleman' she had ever seen. His dress had even ribbons and ruffles ; and round his waist was a blue silken sash. In this attire, with these manners, in the midst of old friends and new (for the Indians loved him from first to last),

and surrounded by the old forests that gave a name to the country, Penn ratified that famous treaty which, as Voltaire says, was the only one in the history of the world that was made without an oath, and that was never broken. So potent for the greatest purposes, in the affairs of this world, if men would but believe it, are the qualities of truth and goodness.

The temporary inhabitant of Holland House next in interest, as well as point of time, to Penn, was Shippen, the famous Jacobite, immortalised by Pope for his sincerity.

> 'I love to pour out all myself as plain
> As downright Shippen, or as old Montaigne;
> In them, as certain to be loved as seen,
> The soul stood forth, nor kept a thought within.'

No wonder that such a man drew houses, when he spoke in Parliament, and that none but the stupid kept away.

> 'More loves the youth, just come to his estate,
> To range the fields, than in the House debate;
> More he delights in fav'rite Jowler's tongue,
> Than in Will Shippen, or Sir William Yonge.'
>
> *Bramston's 'Art of Politics.'*

Very different persons, however, were honest Will Shippen and unprincipled William Yonge, of whom Sir Robert Walpole said, that 'nothing but his talents could have supported his character, and nothing but his character have kept down his

Ball's Rm Turret
Arthur Doyle

talents.' Shippen had talents and character both —the latter of the highest description. Though not so poor as Andrew Marvell, nor on minor points, perhaps, so uncompromising, he was nevertheless to the Whigs of the reign of George the First what Marvell had been to the Tories of Charles and James — the eloquent, witty, open-hearted, and upon the whole, incorruptible opponent. When asked how he should vote, he would say, 'I cannot tell until I hear from Rome.' At Rome resided the Pretender. Sir Robert Walpole observed of him, and of Parliament in general, 'I will not say who are to be corrupted, but I will say who is incorruptible; and that is Shippen.' Shippen, in turn, would say of Sir Robert, 'Robin and I are two honest men. He is for King George, and I for King James; but those men with the long cravats (meaning Sandys, Rushout, and others) they only desire places, either under King George or King James.'

He was sent to the Tower for saying of King George (who could not speak English), that 'the only infelicity of his Majesty's reign was, that he was unacquainted with our language and constitution.' Both sides of the House wished him to soften the expression, but he declined. The Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Second, who was at variance with the King, sent a person to him with the offer of a thousand pounds (as a 'con-

venience,' we suppose, during his imprisonment); but it was not to be expected that he who would not alter his words for love, would do it for money.

Sir Robert Walpole intercepted a letter written to Shippen by the Pretender, and put it, himself, into his hands. It must have been of a description more than usually perilous, considering how openly Shippen talked of his correspondence with the exile. Sir Robert took the opportunity of saying, that he did not expect to alter the other's sentiments, but would hope for his support in case of being personally attacked. To this Shippen agreed, but remained in all other respects the same man. He was son of a country clergyman, and possessed a moderate independence; but latterly married a Northumberland heiress, who turned out unworthy of him. He appears, however, to have had a regard for her relations, for he generally spent his summers with them. At other times, he resided sometimes at Holland House, and sometimes at Richmond; and he lived for many years in Norfolk Street, in the Strand.

Shippen is said to have been a forcible, and even vehement speaker, pouring out his words too rapidly; though at the same time he was accustomed to speak low, and to 'hold his glove before his mouth' —a curious trait in the bearing of so earnest a man. It looked as if he was conscious of wanting a screen, though determined to disregard it; and, in fact, he

appears to have been in the habit of taking away his glove at particular points, and throwing out his words with great animation. He wrote verses; but they were less poetical than to the purpose.

In sixteen hundred and eighty-nine, King William the Third went to look at Holland House, with the view of taking it; but he preferred the house of the Earl of Nottingham, which thus became the Palace. The preference could hardly have been on account of the size; for he might have enlarged the one house as he did the other. Probably, however, the rooms were larger in the Nottingham House, and so were better to begin with. Perhaps, also, William did not find the grounds round about Holland House flat enough to suit his Dutch predilections.

To return to the owners of the mansion which had thus been successively occupied; nothing seems known of Robert, second Earl of Holland, who had quietly succeeded his father, except that, in failure of the elder branch of the family, he also succeeded as fifth Earl of Warwick and Holland.

His son and successor, Edward, married Charlotte, daughter of Sir Thomas Myddleton, of Chirk Castle, in the county of Flint; a lady, whose name and origin we mention, because after the Earl's death she became the wife of Addison. Edward Henry, her son, the next Earl, is the youth whose statue in Kensington Church has been noticed in a former

chapter. He was succeeded by another Edward, his kinsman; and the daughter and only child of this nobleman dying unmarried, the title became extinct. This was in the year seventeen hundred and fifty-nine.

The house fell into the possession of William Edwardes, a Welsh gentleman, whose father had married the daughter of the first Earl of Warwick and Holland, and who, in the year seventeen hundred and seventy-six, was created Baron Kensington; but fourteen years previous he had sold the family mansion to the first Lord Holland of the Fox family, by whom the title had been consequently allowed to be taken; and in the possession of this distinguished race it remains.

We have a good deal to say of them; but first we must return to Countess Charlotte, and her still more distinguished husband.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

The meaning of the word Kensington (p. 5). 'Kensington . . is the "ton" or town of the Saxon family or tribe of the Kensingas, a tribe who appear also in other parts of England, and may perhaps be the same as the Kemsingas.' Loftie's 'Kensington, Picturesque and Historical,' 1888, p. 12.

'*Edward*' (p. 5). In Doomsday Book, as quoted by Mr Loftie, it is 'Edwin.' 'Hoc Manerium [Chenesitun] tenuit *Eduuinus* teignus regis Edwardi et vendere potuit.'

Directly or indirectly (p. 8). The manor of Kensington ceased to belong to the De Veres in 1526, when it passed to the Oxford family. It ultimately came to the Earl and Countess of Argyll, who sold it in 1610 to Sir Walter Cope.

CHAPTER TWO

The Great Exhibition of 1851 (p. 11), subsequently re-erected at Sydenham as the Crystal Palace, occupied a site to the east of the present Albert Memorial.

Ennismore or Listowell House (p. 13), now again Kingston House, is still standing, and is the residence of the Earl of Listowel, K.P.

The Marquis of Wellesley (p. 14), the Duke of Wellington's elder brother, died in 1842. As stated at

p. 15, he had been Governor-General of India from 1797 to 1802.

The Duchess of Kingston (p. 14), who, in Walpole's phrase, 'predecessed' the Marquis at Kingston House, is a notoriety in eighteenth-century annals. Why Leigh Hunt styles her 'an adventuress,' is not clear, as she was the daughter of Colonel Thomas Chudleigh, Lieutenant-Governor of Chelsea Hospital, and she was maid-of-honour to the Princess of Wales. Her first husband was Augustus John Hervey, afterwards third Earl of Bristol, to whom she was married privately in 1747. In 1749 she made her famous undress appearance at the Jubilee Masquerade at Ranelagh, scandalising even her sister maids-of-honour, not—as Mrs Montagu says censoriously—'of maids the strictest.' In 1769 she married the Duke of Kingston, her first husband, who became Earl of Bristol in 1775, being still alive. She was tried for bigamy in 1776, found guilty, pleaded her privilege of peerage, and migrated to St Assize, near Paris, where she turned rabbit merchant. In 1788 she died of a fit of passion. There are several prints of her as 'Iphigenia,' including one by Gainsborough. She also appears in the foreground of Parr's print, after Canaletti, of the Jubilee Ball.

London and Wise (p. 18), referred to in Nos. 5 and 477 of the 'Spectator,' had their nursery at Brompton Park, south of Park and Kingston Houses. They favoured the formal Dutch style; and their 'Laudable Undertakings' are eulogised by Evelyn in his translation of De la Quintinye's 'Compleat Gard'ner,' 1693. Besides Kensington Gardens, they directed the gardens of Hampton Court, Blenheim, Wanstead, Edger, and Melbourne in Derbyshire. Their Brompton nursery was estimated to

contain from £30,000 to £40,000 worth of plants. In 1706 they published a translation of Louis Liger's 'Jardinier Solitaire.'

CHAPTER THREE

Mrs Inchbald (p. 20). *See* Chapter VI.

Count D'Orsay (p. 21). *See* Chapter IV.

Grosvenor Square (p. 24), No. 30 (now 35), where, on 26th December 1797, Wilkes died.

Junius visited (p. 26). This is to beg a question which many hold should be shelved as mercilessly as the discussion out of which window of the Banqueting House Charles I. went to his execution.* Before the appearance of the 'Old Court Suburb' in 1855, Lord Chesterfield, Lord Sackville, Lord Chatham, Earl Temple, Burke, Gibbon, and others, were all put forward as rivals of Sir Philip Francis; and since that date many more have had their advocates. But the Francis theory still obtains, and those who desire a succinct account of the controversy are referred to the 'Note' on the subject, prefixed by Mr C. F. Keary to the first volume of 'The Francis Letters' [1901]. Meanwhile, as literature, 'Junius' is said to be fast becoming what, in popular parlance, is known as 'a back number.' There is a portrait of Francis by James Lonsdale in the National Portrait Gallery.

Mr Taylor's book (p. 26). This is 'The Identity of Junius with a Distinguished Living Character'—*i.e.* Francis, who died 22nd December 1818, two years after it appeared.

* In spite of Lord Beaconsfield's *dictum*, this inquiry has recently been pursued to an unanswerable point by Sir Reginald Palgrave (*Architectural Review*, March 1899, p. 179 *et seq.*).

Its arguments were hotly contested by George Chalmers, E. H. Barker, and C. Wentworth Dilke ('Papers of a Critic'), but they were supported by the investigations of a graphiologist, Charles Chabot ('The Handwriting of Junius professionally investigated,' 1871).

CHAPTER FOUR

Gore House (p. 31) is described in Wheatley and Cunningham's 'London' (ii. p. 130) as 'a long, low, stucco-fronted house, which faced Kensington Gardens.' Wilberforce occupied it from 1808 to 1825. At this date, says the 'Dictionary of National Biography,' Kensington 'was still in the country, and his garden was full of "lilacs, laburnums, nightingales, and swallows."'

A book in three large octavo volumes (p. 35), by R. R. Madden, 1855. It must have just appeared when Leigh Hunt wrote.

Seamore Place (p. 36). At No. 8.

We do not hear of ladies (p. 37). Nevertheless, in a drawing we have seen of the Gore House *salon*, are to be observed the Honourable Mrs Norton, Miss L. E. Landon, and Miss Jane Porter. Leigh Hunt himself is looking on.

He had fled to Paris (p. 41). Lady Blessington died 4th June 1849; Count D'Orsay, 4th August 1852. Thackeray, who had been a Gore House *habitué*, gives an account of him in the interval. 'D'Orsay has fitted himself up a charming *atelier* with arms and trophies, pictures and looking-glasses, the tomb of Blessington, the sword and star of Napoleon, and a crucifix over his bed; and here he dwells without any doubts or remorses, ad-

miring himself in the most horrible pictures which he has painted, and the statues which he gets done for him.' (Thackeray's 'Letters,' 1847-1855, 1887, p. 111.)

There was a sale of the goods at Gore House (p. 41). 'Lady Blessington's French valet wrote to tell her that they were selling catalogues all day long, and that during the five days that things were on view more than 20,000 persons went over the place. He adds: "M. Thackeray est venu aussi, et avait les larmes aux yeux en partant. C'est peut-être la seule personne que j'ài vue réellement affectée en votre depart."' ('The Gorgeous Lady Blessington,' by John Fyvie, *Anglo-Saxon Review*, vol. x. Sept. 1901.)

CHAPTER FIVE

The estate of *the Commissioners* for the Exhibition of 1851 (p. 58), which lies between Exhibition Road and Queen's Gate, is now occupied, among other buildings, by the Royal Albert Hall, the Imperial Institute, and the Natural History Museum.

Gloucester Lodge (p. 58) was pulled down about 1850, its name surviving in the present Gloucester Road. To this house, then secluded in beautiful gardens, Canning was carried after his duel with Castlereagh on Putney Heath.

The real name of *Louise de Querouaille* (p. 60), 'L duchesse de Portsmout'—as she signs herself in the French National Archives — was 'Louise Renée de Kēroualle.' Her sumptuous lodgings at the end of the Long or Stone Gallery at Whitehall, 'pull'd down,' says Evelyn, 'and rebuilt no lesse than three times to please her,' were burnt in 1691. When she lived at Kensington

is not clear, but it must have been long subsequent to this date.

Notwithstanding his disclaimer to Garrick, Johnson, upon another occasion, seems to have expressed himself plainly enough concerning poor Elphinstone's amazing *translation of Martial* (p. 63):—'There are in these verses too much folly for madness, I think, and too much madness for folly' (Birkbeck Hill's 'Johnsonian Miscellanies,' 1897, i. 188). In Elphinstone's time, Kensington House was a noble mansion, opposite to the King's gardens, with an elegant ball-room with handsome bow-windows at the top of the eastern division of the house (Nichols's 'Literary Anecdotes,' 1812, iii. 32). According to the same authority, Elphinstone, who died in 1809, preserved to the end the flapped and capeless coat, powdered bag-wig with high toupee, cocked hat, buckles, and amber-headed cane of the previous century. His brother-in-law, Strahan, disapproved as much of his phonetic spelling as of his Martial.

CHAPTER SIX

Mr Shiel (p. 69). Richard Lalor Shiel died in 1851.

Mrs Inchbald (p. 80), concerning whom there are many particulars in Chapter XXXII. vol. i. of John Taylor's 'Records of my Life,' 1830, was the widow of a minor actor and miniature painter. She had many subsequent suitors —John Kemble, it is reported, among the number—but she never married again, alleging sententiously, 'That for wedlock, friendship was too familiar, and love too precarious.' The hero of the pig-tail incident (Taylor says) was Harris, the chief proprietor of Covent Garden Theatre.

The 'painful self-denial' to which Leigh Hunt refers, is explained by Taylor, upon Mrs Inchbald's own authority, as having for motive the support of poorer relatives. It was Mrs Inchbald who adapted from Kotzebue's 'Das Kind der Liebe' that 'Lovers' Vows' which figures so prominently in Jane Austen's 'Mansfield Park.' Taylor wrote the 'Prologue,' and supplied the verses for the 'rhyming Butler' mentioned in Chapter XIV. of the novel.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Colby House (p. 84) stood, like old Kensington House, on the site afterwards occupied, until 1882, by the Kensington House erected by Mr Grant in 1873. Faulkner, who describes Colby House minutely (pp. 394-6), says it was 'two stories in height.' But when he wrote in 1820 it was occupied by a Mr Mair, who may have added to it.

The Rookery (p. 86). This also disappeared with the erection of Kensington House in 1873.

At No. 16 *Young Street* (p. 87), formerly No. 13, lived Thackeray from 1847 to 1853, and here he wrote 'Vanity Fair,' 'Pendennis,' 'Esmond,' and some of the 'Newcomes.' It is a house with 'two bulging half towers which flank the central doorway,' and give it, as the great author thought, the air of a feudal castle. 'I'll have a flagstaff put over the coping of the wall, and I'll hoist a standard when I am at home!' he told his friend Mr Eyre Crowe, who has made a pretty picture of the house in *Scribner's Magazine* for January 1897. At No. 16, in the first floor bedroom, he puffed a cigar and dictated 'Esmond'; and at Young Street occurred the episode of the irate Irish

gentleman who imagined that Thackeray had libelled his relative in one of his works—not, as Mr Eyre Crowe contends, the story of Catherine Hayes.

Fielding (p. 89) says in 'Tom Jones,' Book 4, chap. ii., that Sophy Western was held to resemble 'the famous Dutchess of *Mazarine*.' The Duchess Mazarin, as Hortensia Mancini should strictly be called, died at Chelsea in 1699, before Fielding was born. In her portrait by Pierre Mignard, she has Miss Western's luxuriant dark hair falling on her shoulders.

The 'Satyr against Wit,' which brought so many foes upon *Sir Richard Blackmore* (p. 93), was published late in 1699; and was promptly answered by the gentlemen of Will's Coffee-house in 'Commendatory Verses on the Author of the two Arthurs' (*i.e.* the Prince and King mentioned at p. 94). Vanbrugh, Garth, Boyle, Sedley, Maynwaring, and Steele all bore part in it, and 'Quack Maurus' (as Dryden called him) fared much as a bear does who overturns a beehive. He was a dull, well-meaning man, and a drowsy poet, 'who wrote to the rumbling of his chariot wheels.' But he sometimes said fine things, as this, which Steele quotes in No. 11 of 'The Theatre': 'He who rejoices at the superior merit of another man, knows a greater thing of himself than he possibly can know of another man.'

It was probably from the Chiswick brewer (p. 96) that *Mawson's Buildings* (now Row) at that place were named. They still exist, at a turning out of Chiswick Mall, and are memorable as the residence of Pope, when that 'paper-sparing poet' was translating the 'Iliad' on the backs of letters and envelopes.

Herring (p. 96) was painted by Hogarth in 1745. In

Maclise's Portrait Gallery there is a terrible picture of his successor at Kensington Square (p. 98), which loses nothing under the interpretative pen of Dante Rossetti. This is Rossetti's description of Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Perigord, 'author of "Palmerston, une Comédie de deux Ans,"' as depicted by 'Alfred Croquis' [Daniel Maclise]: 'One picture here stands out from the rest in mental power, and ranks Maclise as a great master of tragic satire. It is that which grimly shows us the senile torpor of Talleyrand, as he sits in after-dinner sleep between the spread board and the fireplace, surveyed from the mantel-shelf by the busts of all the sovereigns he had served. His elbows are on the chair-arms; his hands hang; . . . the book he read, as the lore he lived by, has dropped between his feet; his chap-fallen mask is spread upward as the scalp rests on the cushioned chair-back; the wick gutters in the wasting candle beside him; and his last master claims him now. All he was is gone; and water or fire for the world after him—what care had he? The picture is more than a satire, it might be called a diagram of damnation: a ghastly historical verdict which becomes the image of the man for ever' (Sharp's 'Rossetti,' 1882, p. 279). After this, one may add to Leigh Hunt's closing lines the charitable verdict of Jeffrey, who met the Prince at Holland House: 'He is more natural, plain, and reasonable, than I had expected; a great deal of the repose of high breeding and old age, with a mild and benevolent manner, and great calmness of speech, rather than the sharp, caustic, cutting speech of a practised utterer of *bons mots*. . . . He did not eat much, nor talk much about eating, except only when he inquired very earnestly into the nature of *cocky-leekie*. . . . He

drank little but iced water' (Cockburn's 'Life of Jeffrey,' 1852, i. pp. 327-8). Talleyrand died in 1838.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Dr John Wall *Callcott* (1766-1821) (p. 102) lived at Kensington Mall, in a house afterwards occupied by his brother, Sir Augustus Wall Callcott, R.A. (See also p. 104.)

Reginald *Spofforth* (1768-1837) (p. 102) is referred to again in Chapter IX.

The old *Church* of St Mary the Virgin (p. 103), which Hunt describes, and in which Macaulay and Thackeray succeeded Wilberforce and Addison as worshippers, disappeared in 1869, when a new Gothic building, from the designs of Sir Gilbert Scott, was erected in its place.

The *famous words* (p. 107), which Addison is said to have addressed to young Lord Warwick, and which are commemorated in the beautiful couplet of Tickell—

> 'He taught us how to live, and (oh, too high
> The price of knowledge) taught us to die'—

rest upon the authority of Young. Eighteenth-century report is not as indulgent to Addison's step-son as is Leigh Hunt, who probably had never read the pamphlets of Colley Cibber.

'Johannes *Jortin* (p. 108) mortalis esse desiit, anno salutis 1770 aetatis 72'—is the full text of the epitaph of the author of the 'Life of Erasmus' (1758-1760), who was also vicar of Kensington in 1762. Dr Johnson liked his sermons; but thought his 'Erasmus' dull (Birkbeck Hill's 'Johnsonian Miscellanies,' 1897, ii. p. 12).

CHAPTER NINE

The *Reverend Martin Madan* (p. 111) is to-day, perhaps, best remembered by his connection with William Cowper. After Cowper's second attack of insanity, Madan's ministrations seem to have afforded his unhappy cousin some temporary relief. But the 'Thelypthora' came upon Cowper in his sane moments, and, by ill-fortune, prompted that 'Anti-Thelypthora,' which even he himself came afterwards to regard as a mistake. It would have been wiser if he had halted at the impromptu to which 'Thelypthora' first gave rise:

> 'If John marries Mary, and Mary alone,
> 'Tis a very good match between Mary and John.
> Should John wed a score, oh, the claws and the scratches!
> It can't be a match—'tis a bundle of matches.'

John Newton, to whom he sent these lines, 'Sternholdized' (the word is his own) the thought thus:

> 'What different senses of that word, A Wife!
> It means the comfort or the bane of life,
> The happiest state is to be pleased with one,
> The next degree is found in having none.'

Leigh Hunt here adds the colour to the particulars given in the note to Chapter V. of *Elphinstone's* dress (p. 114). It was 'drab.' The good schoolmaster's objection to low dresses has an odd suggestion of a well-known apostrophe in Moliere:

> '*Couvrez ce sein que je ne saurois voir;*
> *Par de pareils objets les âmes sont blessées.*'
> *Tartuffe*, Act iii. sc. 2.

Elizabeth Inchbald (p. 116). See note to Chapter VI.

The *considerable office* (p. 119) to which the East India Company appointed James Mill, was that of second in the Examiner's Office, and later on he obtained the superior post of Chief Examiner of the Indian Correspondence.

CHAPTER TEN

Sir John Vanbrugh's (p. 126) mother was a daughter of Sir Dudley Carleton, and not a French woman. Opinions will always differ as to his work as an architect; and such couplets as Swift's

> 'We may expect to see next year
> A mouse-trap man chief engineer'—

will continue to be quoted. But Van 'never wanted wit,' as Pope says; and his plays, upon this ground, cannot become obsolete. *Miss Hoyden* and *Lord Foppington* (p. 127) are characters in 'The Relapse,' re-fashioned by Sheridan as 'A Trip to Scarborough.'

William Cobbett (p. 128) lived where now stands the High Street Station of the Metropolitan and District Railway.

Scarsdale House (p. 134) was long in possession of the Curzon family. Mrs Richmond Ritchie, who lived for a time at 27 Young Street, has reproduced some of the details of this ancient mansion in her delightful story 'Old Kensington' (1873).

Dartiquenave (p. 136). The couplet is from Pope's 'First Satire of the Second Book of Horace,' l. 46; the other quotation from Rowe's imitation of Horace's 'Ne sit ancillæ' (Bk. ii. 4),—'*The Lord* Griffin *to the Earl of* Scarsdale' ('Poems,' 1757, ii. 307).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Sir David Wilkie (p. 139), who, by the way, was not knighted until 1836, lived at No. 24 Lower Phillimore Place, which he describes as 'elegant, commodious, and very well built,' from 1813 to 1824, when his mother died. She was buried at Kensington; and in the following year he went abroad. At No. 24 he painted 'Blind Man's Buff,' 'Distraining for Rent,' the 'Penny Wedding,' the 'Reading of the Will,' 'the Chelsea Pensioners,' and the 'Parish Beadle.' In 1837 he moved to Vicarage Place (p. 144), at the head of Church Lane; and this (according to Wheatley and Cunningham, 1891, ii. p. 327, was known later as Shaftesbury House (p. 144), that name having been given to it by a subsequent resident, Serjeant Wilkins, in honour of his birthplace.

Doctor Thomas Frognall Dibdin (p. 145) was incumbent of St Mary's, Bryanston Square, a fact which his book-loving renown has obscured.

Coleridge (p. 154) *may* have lodged in Edwardes Square; and certainly did live at Hammersmith (7 Portland Place) with his friends the Morgans in 1810 (Dykes Campbell's 'Coleridge,' 1894, p. 180). At No. 32 Edwardes Square, Leigh Hunt himself lived for eleven years—*i.e.* from 1840 to 1851. (*See* INTRODUCTION.)

CHAPTER TWELVE

Lord Holland's couplet (p. 161) is simple and direct; but as the late Mr Locker Lampson thought Luttrell's verses

good enough to give entire ('Lyra Elegantiarum,' 1867, p. 280), his example may be followed here:

'How happily shelter'd is he who reposes
In this haunt of the poet, o'ershadow'd with roses,
While the sun is rejoicing, unclouded, on high,
And summer's full majesty reigns in the sky!—
Let me in, and be seated—I'll try if, thus placed,
I can catch but one spark of his feeling and taste,
Can steal a sweet note from his musical strain,
Or a ray of his genius to kindle my brain.
Well—now I am fairly install'd in the bower,
How lovely the scene! How propitious the hour!
The breeze is perfumed by the hawthorn it stirs;
All is beauty around me;—but nothing occurs,
Not a thought, I protest, though I'm *here* and alone,
Not a line can I hit on, that Rogers would own,
Though my senses are ravish'd, my feelings in tune,
And Holland's my host, and the season is June.
The trial is ended. Nor garden, nor grove,
Though poets amid them may linger or rove,
Nor a seat e'en so hallow'd as *this* can impart
The fancy and fire that must spring from the heart.
So I rise, since the Muses continue to frown,
No more of a poet than when I sat down;
While Rogers, on whom they look kindly, can strike
Their lyre, at all times, in all places, alike.'

This inscription was composed in June 1818, and the title to the Holland couplet gives the exact position of the summer-house: 'On a Covered Seat in the Flower Garden at Holland House.'

The open undulating ground (p. 163) is no longer 'terminated by the Uxbridge Road,' as it is now absorbed by the rows of houses known as 'Holland Park, Notting Hill.'

Lord Camelford (p. 163). The duel between Lord Camelford and Captain Best took place in 1804 'on the site'—says Mr Loftie in his 'Kensington'—'of the old manor-house of West Town, now within the grounds of Oak Lodge.'

Lady Diana Rich (p. 167). The scene of this ghost story was the Green Lane, leading to Melbury Road.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The chamber in which Addison died (p. 170), according to the Princess Marie Liechtenstein ('Holland House,' 1874, ii. p. 77), was the dining-room on the first floor.

By the same authority (ii. p. 109), it is stated that the *library* (p. 171) contains the green cloth-covered table which Addison had at the Temple, a 'small and simple' piece of furniture, 'defaced by ink blots.' Having passed to his daughter, and afterwards to Lawrence and Rogers, it was finally purchased at Rogers's sale by Henry Edward, Lord Holland, 5th May 1856.

Meditating his 'Spectators' (p. 171). Leigh Hunt seems to have overlooked the fact that the *Spectator* and, for the matter of that, the *Freeholder* mentioned by Lord Holland (p. 172), were things of the past when Addison lived at Holland House, since he married Charlotte, Countess of Warwick, on 2nd August 1716.

Camoens (p. 173). The Holland copy of the first edition of 'The Lusiads,' 1572, is more fully described in 'Holland House,' ii. pp. 176-8. The Spanish inscription is as follows:—'Que cosa mas lastimosa que ver un tan gran ingenio mal logrado yo lo vi morir en un hospital

en Lisboa sin tener una savana con que cubrirse, despues de aver triunfado en la India Oriental y de aver navegado 5500 leguas por mar y que aviso tan grande paratos que de noche y de dia se cansan estudiando sin provecho como lo avaña en ordir telas para coger moscas.' The book belonged to Frere, the translator of Aristophanes, who gave it to Lord Holland in 1812.

The *manuscripts* (p. 174) are treated in Chapter XXVIII. of 'Holland House' (vol. ii. pp. 179-201).

The portrait of *Addison* (p. 175), which was bought with the table at Rogers's sale in 1856, is not above suspicion, as it has been contended that it represents Swift's friend, Sir Andrew Fountaine ('Holland House,' ii. pp. 116-7).

At the back of the miniature of *Robespierre* (p. 175), Charles Fox had written—'*un scélérat, un lâche et un fou*' (*ibid.* ii. p. 121).

Hogarth's '*Indian Emperor*' (p. 176) was engraved in 1792 by Robert Dodd.

The *grand-niece of Sir Isaac Newton*, who played 'Alibeck' (p. 176), was little Miss Conduitt (afterwards Lady Lymington), the daughter of Newton's niece, Catherine Barton, who married Mr Conduitt of the Mint in 1717. It was at Mr Conduitt's house that this play was performed in 1731.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

In a former chapter (p. 177). Chapter the First.

The family ever occupied it (p. 177). It is very doubtful whether they ever did so.

The family came from Holland (p. 179). 'It is probable that the name is derived from a little town, Ver, on the

river Ver, below Coutances, in Normandy' (Loftie's 'Kensington,' 1888, p. 43).

The daughter of the last lord (p. 181). Diana de Vere, second daughter of Aubrey de Vere, twentieth Earl of Oxford, married Charles Beauclerk, Duke of St Albans.

The Earl's widow (p. 184). Lady Holland died in 1655, and was buried in Kensington Church on September 1.

END OF VOLUME ONE

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